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SCOTT

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The Lakeside Series of English Readings

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT

EDITED AND COMPILED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

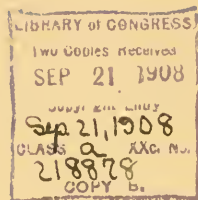
BY

CHARLES E. S. FIELDEN



CHICAGO
AINSWORTH AND COMPANY

1908



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A. M. 25 June 1830

PREFATORY NOTE

THE text here given is that of the standard edition of Lockhart with a few slight modifications in punctuation and spelling. Scott's notes to the edition of 1830 have been drawn upon somewhat freely, by reason of their illuminating quality. No attempt has been made to give the meaning of such words as may be readily found in the best dictionaries; the present editor believing that the pupil will derive more benefit from acquiring the habit of frequent reference than he would gain from second-hand information. The author's introduction to the edition of 1830 is given in full as it serves to illustrate Scott's characteristic candor and modesty in speaking of his own work.

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INTRODUCTION

I. BIOGRAPHICAL

WALTER SCOTT, aptly named "The Wizard of the North," was born in Edinburgh, August 15, 1771. The same day saw the nativity of Napoleon Bonaparte. A parentage singularly fitted to inspire the lad with the traditions of his race was his inheritance. His father, kindly, benevolent, and sincere, withal stern and scrupulous, yet in his way affectionate, was a man of standing in the community in which he dwelt. He was a Writer to the Signet, a court officer corresponding to the English barrister or solicitor, in which profession he hoped his son Walter would succeed him. His mother was a woman of excellent taste and discrimination. She joined to a happy temperament a strong imaginative nature, which had a material effect upon the future poet and novelist. In his infancy he contracted as a result of a teething fever a lameness from which he never completely recovered. By the advice of his grandfather he was sent to the quiet country farmhouse of Sandy Knowe where it was hoped that outdoor air and exercise would restore him to health. It was here that the youth acquired the habit of assiduous reading which never left him, and to which habit the world is largely indebted for that immense knowledge which enabled him to give in rapid succession such an enormous literary production.

Many curious and interesting stories are told of Scott's boyhood. At school he was often at the top and as often at the bottom of his class. On one occasion it is related of him that he made a sudden leap to the top. The master had asked the boys "Is *with* ever a noun?" All were silent until the question reached Walter, then nearly at the bottom of the class, who instantly replied by quoting from the seventh verse of the sixteenth chapter of the Book of Judges, "And Samson said unto Delilah, If they bind me with seven green *withs* that were never dried, then shall I be weak and be as another man." This unexpected answer naturally surprised the master and the others but it sent him to the top of the class.

As a youth he was an ardent student of old romantic tales. He studied French and Italian which enabled him to read in the original those ancient tales of chivalry which he later so charmingly reproduced. History, poetry, tale, romance, legend all were devoured by him with ravenous appetite. His mind fastened upon everything that was suited to its tastes and digested it into just the kind of nourishment it needed. His biographer has given us the following account of how his afternoons at the age of sixteen or seventeen were spent:

Every Saturday, and more frequently during the vacations, we used to retire, with three or four books . . . to Salisbury Crags, Arthur's Seat, or Blackford Hill, and read them together. He read faster than I, and had, on this account, to wait a little at finishing every two pages, before turning the leaf. The books we most delighted in were romances of knight-errantry; the "Castle of Otranto," Spenser, Ariosto, and Boiardo, were great favorites. We used to climb up the rocks in search of places where we might sit sheltered from the wind; and the more inaccessible they were, the better we liked them. He was very

expert at climbing. Sometimes we got into places where we found it difficult to move either up or down, and I recollect it being proposed, on several occasions, that I should go for a ladder to see and extricate him; but I never had any need really to do so, for he always managed somehow either to get down or ascend to the top. The number of books we thus devoured was very great. I forgot a great part of what I read, but my friend, notwithstanding he read with such rapidity, remained, to my surprise, master of it all, and could even weeks or months afterward repeat a whole page in which anything had particularly struck him at the moment. After we had continued this practice of reading for two years or more together, he proposed that we should recite to each other alternately such adventures of knight-errants as we could ourselves contrive; and we continued to do so a long while. He found no difficulty in it, and used to recite for half an hour or more at a time, while I seldom continued half that space. The stories we told were, as Sir Walter has said, interminable—for we were unwilling to have any of our favorite knights killed.”¹

Scott finished his studies and in June 1792 was called to the bar, where he practiced with only moderate success for fourteen years. As a Writer to the Signet he would probably never have been heard of outside of Scotland, but as an author he earned a fame that was world wide, money in fabulous amounts, and a title.

In 1797 Scott met Miss Charlotte Mary Carpenter (or Charpentier) the daughter of a French refugee, and on Christmas eve of the same year they were married. Shortly afterward he was appointed to the office of Sheriff of Selkirkshire, at a salary of £300 a year, and leased a country home on the Tweed called Ashcsticl. In 1806 he assumed the duties of one of the Clerks of Session, although

¹J. G. Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Scott*

he did not receive the entire emoluments of this office, which amounted to £1300 annually until 1811.

Scott began his literary career by the publication in 1802 of his first literary success *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, a collection of ballads and songs which brought him some immediate reputation. His other great poems followed in quick succession: *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, 1805; *Marmion*, 1808; *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810; *The Vision of Don Roderick*, 1811, and *Rokeby*, 1813. These were received with acclaim by the reading public and Scott's reputation was firmly established. He found himself famous and wealthy. In 1812 he purchased an estate consisting of about one hundred acres, near Melrose Abbey which he named Abbotsford. He spent enormous sums of money in building and improvements and attained his pet ambition, that of becoming a landed proprietor on an almost baronial scale. In 1820 King George IV conferred a baronetcy upon him, thereby crowning his desire for family honors.

An unfortunate event in the life of the poet was his connection with the publishing firm of Ballantyne & Co. and with Constable the publisher of his novels. Both these firms failed in 1826 and Scott found himself liable for their indebtedness, which amounted to the appalling sum of £130,000. Instead of declaring himself bankrupt Scott surrendered all his property at Abbotsford and elsewhere, and set heroically to work to wipe out this debt. In less than two years time he had earned and paid to his creditors a sum equal to \$200 000. But the task was killing, and although constantly struggling with disease he worked bravely on. When he was warned by his medical advisers, after his first attack of apoplexy, that if he per-

sisted in working his brain his malady must inevitably recur with redoubled severity, he replied: "As for bidding me not to work, Molly might as well put the kettle on the fire, and say, '*Now don't boil.*' . . . I foresee distinctly that if I were to be idle I should go mad." Go mad he did, from excessive labor; but not till after many a warning and presentiment of the attack of which he died. Years before his death the reluctant conviction forced itself on the mind of his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart, that the mighty magician of the pen was losing something of his energy. Though the faculties were there, and occasionally blazed forth with their old meridian splendor, yet his sagacious judgment and matchless memory were frequently at fault:—

"Among the chords the fingers strayed,
And an uncertain warbling made."

Ever and anon he paused and looked around him, like one half waking from a dream mocked with shadows. The sad bewilderment of his gaze showed a momentary consciousness that, like Samson in the lap of the Philistine, "his strength was passing from him, and he was becoming weak, like unto other men." Then came the strong effort of aroused will. The clouds dispersed as if before a resistless current of pure air; all was bright and serene as of old; and then the sky was shrouded again in yet deeper darkness, till at last the night of death closed the scene. He died at his beloved Abbotsford, on September 21, 1832. His remains were buried in the Abbey of Dryburgh.

Many monuments and statues have been erected to his memory; that in the market-place of Selkirk bears the following inscription:

INTRODUCTION

ERECTED IN AUGUST, 1839.
 IN PROUD AND AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE
 OF
 SIR WALTER SCOTT, BARONET
 SHERIFF OF THIS COUNTY
 FROM 1800 TO 1832.

By Yarrow's stream still let me stray,
 Though none should guide my feeble way;
 Still feel the breeze down Ettricke break,
 Although it chill my withered cheek.

II. THE LADY OF THE LAKE.

The following synopsis of the story of "*The Lady of the Lake*" is given by Lord Jeffrey in the "*Edinburgh Review*" for August 1810, and will aid the pupil in gaining a distinct idea of the perspective of the poem:

"The first canto begins with a description of a staghunt in the Highlands of Perthshire. As the chase lengthens, the sportsmen drop off; till at last the foremost horseman is left alone; and his horse, overcome with fatigue, stumbles and dies. The adventurer, climbing up a craggy eminence, discovers Loch Katrine spread out in evening glory before him. The huntsman winds his horn; and sees, to his infinite surprise, a little skiff, guided by a lovely woman, glide from beneath the trees that overhang the water, and approach the shore at his feet. Upon the stranger's approach, she pushes the shallop from the shore in alarm. After a short parley, however, she carries him to a woody island, where she leads him into a sort of sylvan mansion, rudely constructed, and hung round with trophies of war and the chase. An elderly lady is introduced at supper; and the stranger, after disclosing himself to be 'James Fitz-James, the knight of Snowdown,' tries in vain to discover the name and history of the ladies.

"The second canto opens with a picture of the aged harper, Allan-bane, sitting on the island beach with the damsel, watching the skiff which carries the stranger back to land. A conversation ensues, from which the reader

gathers that the lady is a daughter of the Douglas, who, being exiled by royal displeasure from court, had accepted this asylum from Sir Roderick Dhu, a Highland chieftain long outlawed for deeds of blood; that this dark chief is in love with his fair *protégée*, but that her affections are engaged to Malcolm Græme, a younger and more amiable mountaineer. The sound of distant music is heard on the lake; and the barges of Sir Roderick are discovered, proceeding in triumph to the island. Ellen, hearing her father's horn at that instant on the opposite shore, flies to meet him and Malcolm Græme, who is received with cold and stately civility by the lord of the isle. Sir Roderick informs the Douglas that his retreat has been discovered, and that the King (James V), under pretence of hunting has assembled a large force in the neighborhood. He then proposes impetuously that they should unite their fortunes by his marriage with Ellen, and rouse the whole Western Highlands. The Douglas, intimating that his daughter has repugnances which she cannot overcome, declares that he will retire to a cave in the neighboring mountains until the issue of the King's threat is seen. The heart of Roderick is wrung with agony at this rejection; and when Malcolm advances to Ellen, he pushes him violently back—and a scuffle ensues, which is with difficulty appeased by the giant arm of Douglas. Malcolm then withdraws in proud resentment, plunges into the water, and swims over by moonlight to the mainland.

“The third canto opens with an account of the ceremonies employed in summoning the clan. This is accomplished by the consecration of a small wooden cross, which, with its points scorched and dipped in blood, is carried with incredible celerity through the whole territory of the chieftain. The eager fidelity with which this fatal signal is carried on, is represented with great spirit. A youth starts from the side of his father's coffin, to bear it forward and, having run his stage, delivers it to a young bridegroom returning from church, who instantly binds his plaid around him, and rushes onward. In the meantime Douglas and his daughter have taken refuge in the mountain cave;

and Sir Roderick, passing near their retreat on his way to the muster, hears Ellen's voice singing her evening hymn to the Virgin. He does not obtrude on her devotions, but hurries to the place of rendezvous.

"The fourth canto begins with some ceremonies by a wild hermit of the clan, to ascertain the issue of the impending war; and this oracle is obtained—that the party shall prevail which first sheds the blood of its adversary. The scene then shifts to the retreat of the Douglas, where the minstrel is trying to soothe Ellen in her alarm at the disappearance of her father, by singing a fairy ballad to her. As the song ends, the knight of Snowdown suddenly appears before her, declares his love, and urges her to put herself under his protection. Ellen throws herself on his generosity, confesses her attachment to Grame, and prevails on him to seek his own safety by a speedy retreat from the territory of Roderick Dhu. Before he goes, the stranger presents her with a ring, which he says he has received from King James, with a promise to grant any boon asked by the person producing it. As he retreats, his suspicions are excited by the conduct of his guide, and confirmed by the warnings of a mad woman whom they encounter. His false guide discharges an arrow at him, which kills the maniac. The knight slays the murderer; and learning from the expiring victim that her brain has been turned by the cruelty of Sir Roderick Dhu, he vows vengeance. When chilled with the midnight cold and exhausted with fatigue, he suddenly comes upon a chief reposing by a lonely watch-fire; and being challenged in the name of Roderick Dhu, boldly avows himself his enemy. The clansman, however, disdains to take advantage of a worn-out wanderer; and pledges him safe escort out of Sir Roderick's territory, when he must answer his defiance with his sword. The stranger accepts these chivalrous terms; and the warriors sup and sleep together. This ends the fourth canto.

"At dawn, the knight and the mountaineer proceed toward the Lowland frontier. A dispute arises concerning the character of Roderick Dhu, and the knight expresses

his desire to meet in person and do vengeance upon the predatory chief. 'Have then thy wish' answers his guide; and gives a loud whistle. A whole legion of armed men start up from their mountain ambush in the heath; while the chief turns proudly and says, 'I am Roderick Dhu.' Sir Roderick then by a signal dismisses his men to their concealment. Arrived at his frontier, the chief forces the knight to stand upon his defense. Roderick, after a hard combat is laid wounded on the ground; Fitz-James, sounding his bugle, brings four squires to his side; and, after giving the wounded chief into their charge, gallops rapidly on towards Stirling. As he ascends the hill to the castle, he descries approaching the same place the giant form of Douglas, who has come to deliver himself up to the king, in order to save Malcolm Græme and Sir Roderick from the impending danger. Before entering the castle, Douglas is seized with the whim to engage in the holiday sports which are going forward outside; he wins prize after prize, and receives his reward from the hand of the prince, who, however, does not condescend to recognize his former favorite. Roused at last by an insult from one of the royal grooms, Douglas proclaims himself, and is ordered into custody by the king. At this instant a messenger arrives with tidings of an approaching battle between the clan of Roderick and the King's lieutenant, the Earl of Mar; and is ordered back to prevent the conflict, by announcing that both Sir Roderick and Lord Douglas are in the hands of their sovereign.

"The last canto opens in the guard room of the royal castle at Stirling, at dawn. While the mercenaries are quarrelling and singing at the close of a night of debauch, the sentinels introduce Ellen and the minstrel Allan-bane—who are come in search of Douglas. Ellen awes the ruffian soldiery by her grace and liberality, and is at length conducted to a more seemly waiting place, until she may obtain audience with the king. While Allan-bane, in the cell of Sir Roderick, sings to the dying chieftain of the glorious battle which has just been waged by his clansmen against the forces of the Earl of Mar, Ellen, in another part

of the palace, hears the voice of Malcolm Græme lamenting his captivity from an adjoining turret. Before she recovers from her agitation she is startled by the appearance of Fitz-James, who comes to inform her that the court is assembled, and the king at leisure to receive her suit. He conducts her to the hall of presence, round which Ellen casts a timid and eager glance for the monarch. But all the glittering figures are uncovered, and James Fitz-James alone wears his cap and plume. The Knight of Snowdown is the King of Scotland. Struck with awe and terror, Ellen falls speechless at his feet, pointing to the ring which he has put upon her finger. The prince raises her with eager kindness, declares that her father is forgiven, and bids her ask a boon for some other person. The name of Græme trembles on her lips, but she cannot trust herself to utter it. The king, in playful vengeance, condemns Malcolm Græme to fetters, takes a chain of gold from his own neck, and throwing it over that of the young chief, puts the clasp in the hand of Ellen."

THE AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION TO THE LADY
OF THE LAKE, EDITION OF 1830

AFTER the success of *Marmion*, I felt inclined to exclaim with Ulysses in the *Odyssey*:—

Οὗτος μὲν δὴ ἄεθλος ἀάατος ἐκτετέλεσται.

Νῦν αὖτε σκοπὸν ἄλλον. Odys. xxii. 5.

“One venturous game my hand has won to-day—
Another, gallants, yet remains to play.”

The ancient manners, the habits and customs of the aboriginal race by whom the Highlands of Scotland were inhabited, had always appeared to me peculiarly adapted to poetry. The change in their manners, too, had taken place almost within my own time, or at least I had learned many particulars concerning the ancient state of the Highlands from the old men of the last generation. I had always thought the old Scottish Gael highly adapted for poetical composition. The feuds and political dissensions which, half a century earlier, would have rendered the richer and wealthier part of the kingdom indisposed to countenance a poem the scene of which was laid in the Highlands, were now sunk in the generous compassion which the English, more than any other nation, feel for the misfortunes of an honourable foe. The poems of Ossian had, by their popularity, sufficiently shown that if writings on Highland subjects were qualified to interest the reader, mere national prejudices were, in the present day, very unlikely to interfere with their success.

I had also read a great deal, seen much, and heard more, of that romantic country, where I was in the habit of spending some time every autumn; and the scenery of Loch Katrine was connected with the recollection of many a dear friend and merry expedition of former days. This poem, the action of which lay among scenes so beautiful,

and so deeply imprinted on my recollections, was a labour of love, and it was no less so to recall the manners and incidents introduced. The frequent custom of James IV., and particularly of James V., to walk through their kingdom in disguise, afforded me the hint of an incident which never fails to be interesting if managed with the slightest address or dexterity.

I may now confess, however, that the employment, though attended with great pleasure, was not without its doubts and anxieties. A lady to whom I was nearly related and with whom I lived, during her whole life, on the most brotherly terms of affection, was residing with me at the time when the work was in progress, and used to ask me what I could possibly do to rise so early in the morning (that happening to be the most convenient to me for composition). At last I told her the subject of my meditations; and I can never forget the anxiety and affection expressed in her reply. "Do not be so rash," she said, "my dearest cousin. You are already popular,—more so, perhaps, than you yourself will believe, or than even I, or other partial friends, can fairly allow to your merit. You stand high—do not rashly attempt to climb higher, and incur the risk of a fall; for, depend upon it, a favourite will not be permitted even to stumble with impunity." I replied to this affectionate expostulation in the words of Montrose—

"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch
To gain or lose it all."

"If I fail," I said, for the dialogue is strong in my recollection, "it is a sign that I ought never to have succeeded, and I will write prose for life; you shall see no change in my temper, nor will I eat a single meal the worse. But if I succeed—

'Up with the bonnie blue bonnet,
The dirk, and the feather, and a'!'

Afterwards I showed my affectionate and anxious critic the first canto of the poem, which reconciled her to my

imprudence. Nevertheless, though I answered thus confidently, with the obstinacy often said to be proper to those who bear my surname, I acknowledge that my confidence was considerably shaken by the warning of her excellent taste and unbiased friendship. Nor was I much comforted by her retraction of the unfavorable judgment, when I recollected how likely a natural partiality was to effect that change of opinion. In such cases, affection rises like a light on the canvas, improves any favourable tints which it formerly exhibited, and throws its defects into the shade.

I remember that about the same time a friend started in to "heeze up my hope," like the "sportsman with his cutty gun," in the old song. He was bred a farmer, but a man of powerful understanding, natural good taste, and warm poetical feeling, perfectly competent to supply the wants of an imperfect or irregular education. He was a passionate admirer of field-sports, which we often pursued together.

As this friend happened to dine with me at Ashestiel one day, I took the opportunity of reading to him the first canto of *The Lady of the Lake*, in order to ascertain the effect the poem was likely to produce upon a person who was but too favourable a representative of readers at large. It is of course to be supposed that I determined rather to guide my opinion by what my friend might appear to feel, than by what he might think fit to say. His reception of my recitation, or prelection, was rather singular. He placed his hand across his brow, and listened with great attention through the whole account of the stag-hunt, till the dogs threw themselves into the lake to follow their master, who embarks with Ellen Douglas. He then started up with a sudden exclamation, struck his hand on the table, and declared, in a voice of censure calculated for the occasion, that the dogs must have been totally ruined by being permitted to take the water after such a severe chase. I own I was much encouraged by the species of revery which had possessed so zealous a follower of the sports of the ancient Nimrod, who had been completely surprised out of all doubts of the reality of the tale. An-

other of his remarks gave me less pleasure. He detected the identity of the king with the wandering knight, Fitz-James, when he winds his bugle to summon his attendants.

This discovery, as Mr. Pepys says of the rent in his camlet cloak, was but a trifle, yet it troubled me; and I was at a good deal of pains to efface any marks by which I thought my secret could be traced before the conclusion, when I relied on it with the same hope of producing effect with which the Irish post-boy is said to reserve a "trot for the avenue."

I took uncommon pains to verify the accuracy of the local circumstances of this story. I recollect, in particular, that to ascertain whether I was telling a probable tale I went into Perthshire, to see whether King James could actually have ridden from the banks of Loch Vennachar to Stirling Castle within the time supposed in the poem, and had the pleasure to satisfy myself that it was quite practicable.

After a considerable delay, *The Lady of the Lake* appeared in June, 1810; and its success was certainly so extraordinary as to induce me for the moment to conclude that I had at last fixed a nail in the proverbially inconstant wheel of Fortune, whose stability in behalf of an individual who had so boldly courted her favours for three successive times had not as yet been shaken. I had attained, perhaps, that degree of reputation at which prudence, or certainly timidity, would have made a halt, and discontinued efforts by which I was far more likely to diminish my fame than to increase it. But, as the celebrated John Wilkes is said to have explained to his late Majesty, that he himself, amid his full tide of popularity, was never a Wilkite, so I can, with honest truth, exculpate myself from having been at any time a partisan of my own poetry, even when it was in the highest fashion with the million. It must not be supposed that I was either so ungrateful or so superabundantly candid as to despise or scorn the value of those whose voice had elevated me so much higher than my own opinion told me I deserved. I felt, on the contrary, the more grateful to the public, as receiving that from par-

tiality to me which I could not have claimed from merit; and I endeavoured to deserve the partiality by continuing such exertions as I was capable of for their amusement.

It may be that I did not, in this continued course of scribbling, consult either the interest of the public or my own. But the former had effectual means of defending themselves, and could, by their coldness, sufficiently check any approach to intrusion; and for myself, I had now for several years dedicated my hours so much to literary labour that I should have felt difficulty in employing myself otherwise; and so, like Dogberry, I generously bestowed all my tediousness on the public, comforting myself with the reflection that, if posterity should think me undeserving of the favour with which I was regarded by my contemporaries, "they could not but say I *had* the crown," and had enjoyed for a time that popularity which is so much coveted.

I conceived, however, that I held the distinguished situation I had obtained, however unworthily, rather like the champion of pugilism, on the condition of being always ready to show proofs of my skill, than in the manner of the champion of chivalry, who performs his duties only on rare and solemn occasions. I was in any case conscious that I could not long hold a situation which the caprice, rather than the judgment, of the public had bestowed upon me, and preferred being deprived of my precedence by some more worthy rival, to sinking into contempt for my indolence, and losing my reputation by what Scottish lawyers call the *negative prescription*. Accordingly, those who choose to look at the Introduction to *Rokeby*, will be able to trace the steps by which I declined as a poet to figure as a novelist; as the ballad says, Queen Eleanor sunk at Charing Cross to rise again at Queenhithe.

It only remains for me to say that, during my short pre-eminence of popularity, I faithfully observed the rules of moderation which I had resolved to follow before I began my course as a man of letters. If a man is determined to make a noise in the world, he is sure to encounter abuse and ridicule, as he who gallops furiously through a village

must reckon on being followed by the curs in full cry. Experienced persons know that in stretching to flog the latter, the rider is very apt to catch a bad fall; nor is an attempt to chastise a malignant critic attended with less danger to the author. On this principle, I let parody, burlesque, and squibs find their own level; and while the latter hissed most fiercely, I was cautious never to catch them up, as schoolboys do, to throw them back against the naughty boy who fired them off, wisely remembering that they are in such cases apt to explode in the handling. Let me add that my reign (since Byron has so called it) was marked by some instances of good-nature as well as patience. I never refused a literary person of merit such services in smoothing his way to the public as were in my power; and I had the advantage—rather an uncommon one with our irritable race—to enjoy general favour without incurring permanent ill-will, so far as is known to me, among any of my contemporaries.

ABBOTSFORD, April, 1830.

EXTRACT FROM SCOTT'S "TALES OF A GRAND-FATHER"

[James IV. was killed at the battle of Flodden Field and his wife, Margaret, who was daughter of Henry VII. of England, conducted the regency during the minority of James V. She was succeeded in the regency by the Duke of Albany, who held power until 1528, when James V. assumed personal exercise of the royal prerogatives. The period of the regency was marked by much internal dissension and civil strife. The following extract from Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather" will illustrate better than anything else available, the historical facts in the life of James V., which will help to a better understanding and appreciation of *The Lady of the Lake*.]

QUEEN MARGARET, who hated her husband Angus, as I have told you, now combined with his enemy Arran, to call James V., her son (though then only twelve years old), to the management of the public affairs; but the Earl of Angus, returning at this crisis from France, speedily obtained a superiority in the Scottish councils, and became the head of those nobles who desired to maintain a friendly alliance with England rather than to continue that league with France which had so often involved Scotland in quarrels with their powerful neighbour.

Margaret might have maintained her authority, for she was personally much beloved; but it was the fate or the folly of that Queen to form rash marriages. Like her brother, Henry of England, who tired of his wives, Margaret seems to have been addicted to tire of her husbands; but she had not the power of cutting the heads from the spouses whom she desired to be rid of. Having obtained a divorce from Angus, she married a young man of little power and inferior rank, named Henry Stewart, a younger son of Lord Evandale. She lost her influence by that ill-advised measure. Angus, therefore, rose to the supreme authority in Scotland, obtained possession of the person of the King,

transacted every thing in the name of James, but by his own authority, and became in all respects the Regent of Scotland, though without assuming the name.

The talents of the Earl of Angus were equal to the charge he had assumed, and as he reconciled himself to his old rival the Earl of Arran, his power seemed founded on a sure basis. He was able to accomplish a treaty of peace with England, which was of great advantage to the kingdom. But, according to the fashion of the times, Angus was much too desirous to confer all the great offices, lands, and other advantages in the disposal of the crown, upon his own friends and adherents, to the exclusion of all the nobles and gentry who had either taken part against him in the late struggle for power, or were not decidedly his partisans. The course of justice also was shamefully perverted, by the partiality of Angus for his friends, kinsmen, and adherents.

An old historian says, "that there dared no man strive at law with a Douglas, or yet with the adherent of a Douglas; for if he did, he was sure to get the worst of his law-suit. And," he adds, "although Angus travelled through the country under the pretence of punishing thieves, robbers, and murderers, there were no malefactors so great as those which rode in his own company."

The King, who was now fourteen years old, became disgusted with the sort of restraint in which Angus detained him, and desirous to free himself from his tutelage. His mother had doubtless a natural influence over him, and that likewise was exerted to the Earl's prejudice. The Earl of Lennox, a wise and intelligent nobleman, near in blood to the King, was also active in fostering his displeasure against the Douglasses, and schemes began to be agitated for taking the person of the King out of the hands of Angus. But Angus was so well established in the government that his authority could not be destroyed except by military force; and it was not easy to bring such to bear against one so powerful, and of such a martial character.

At length it seems to have been determined to employ

the agency of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, a man of great courage and military talent, head of a numerous and powerful clan, and possessed of much influence on the Border. He had been once the friend of Angus, and had even scaled the walls of Edinburgh with a great body of his clan, in order to render the party of the Earl uppermost in that city. But of late he had attached himself to Lennox, by whose counsel he seems to have been guided in the enterprise which I am about to give you an account of.

Some excesses had taken place on the Border, probably by the connivance of Buccleuch, which induced Angus to march to Jedburgh, bringing the King in his company, lest he should have made his escape during his absence. He was joined by the clans of Home and Ker, both in league with him, and he had, besides, a considerable body of chosen attendants. Angus was returning from this expedition, and had passed the night at Melrose. The Kers and Homes had taken leave of the Earl, who with the King and his retinue had left Melrose, when a band of a thousand horsemen suddenly appeared on the side of an eminence called Halidon-hill, and, descending into the valley, interposed between the Earl and the bridge, by which he must pass the Tweed on his return northward.

"Sir," said Angus to the King, "yonder comes Buccleuch, with the Border thieves of Teviotdale and Liddesdale, to interrupt your Grace's passage. I vow to God they shall either fight or fly. You shall halt upon this knoll with my brother George, while we drive off these banditti, and clear the road for your Grace."

The King made no answer, for in his heart he desired that Buccleuch's undertaking might be successful; but he dared not say so.

Angus, meantime, despatched a herald to charge Buccleuch to withdraw with his forces. Scott replied, "that he was come, according to the custom of the Borders, to show the King his clan and followers, and invite his Grace to dine at his house." To which he added, "that he knew the King's mind as well as Angus." The Earl advanced, and the Borderers, shouting their war-cry of Bellenden

immediately joined battle, and fought stoutly; but the Homes and Kers, who were at no great distance, returned on hearing the alarm, and coming through the little village of Darnick, set upon Buccleuch's men and decided the fate of the day. The Border riders fled, but Buccleuch and his followers fought bravely in their retreat, and turning upon the Kers, slew several of them; in particular, Ker of Cessford, a chief of the name, who was killed by the lance of one of the Elliots, a retainer of Buccleuch. His death occasioned a deadly feud between the clans of Scott and Ker, which lasted for a century, and cost much blood. This skirmish took place on the 25th of July, 1526. About eighty Scotts were slain on the field of battle, and a sentence was pronounced against Buccleuch and many of his clan, as guilty of high treason. But after the King had shaken off the yoke of the Douglasses, he went in person to Parliament to obtain the restoration of Buccleuch, who, he declared on his kingly word, had come to Melrose without any purpose of quarrel, but merely to pay his duty to his prince, and show him the number of his followers. In evidence of which the King affirmed that the said Wat was not clad in armour, but in a leathern coat (a buff-coat, I suppose), with a black bonnet on his head. The family were restored to their estates accordingly; but Sir Walter Scott was long afterwards murdered by the Kers, at Edinburgh, in revenge of the death of the Laird of Cessford.

The Earl of Lennox, being disappointed in procuring the King's release by means of Buccleuch, now resolved to attempt it in person. He received much encouragement from the Chancellor Beaton (distinguished at the skirmish called Clean-the-Causeway), from the Earl of Glencairn, and other noblemen, who saw with displeasure the Earl of Angus confining the young King like a prisoner, and that all the administration of the kingdom centred in the Douglasses. Lennox assembled an army of ten or twelve thousand men, and advanced upon Edinburgh from Stirling. Angus and Arran, who were still closely leagued together, encountered Lennox, with an inferior force, near the village

of Newliston. The rumour that a battle was about to commence soon reached Edinburgh, when Sir George Douglas hastened to call out the citizens in arms, to support his brother, the Earl of Angus. The city bells were rung, trumpets were sounded, and the King himself was obliged to mount on horseback, to give countenance to the measures of the Douglasses, whom in his soul he detested. James was so sensible of his situation that he tried, by every means in his power, to delay the march of the forces which were mustered at Edinburgh. When they reached the village of Corstorphine, they heard the thunder of the guns; which inflamed the fierce impatience of George Douglas to reach the field of battle, and also increased the delays of the young King, who was in hopes Angus might be defeated before his brother could come up. Douglas, perceiving this, addressed the King in language which James never forgot nor forgave:—"Your Grace need not think to escape us," said this fierce warrior; "if our enemies had hold of you on one side, and we on the other, we would tear you to pieces ere we would let you go."

Tidings now came from the field of battle that Lennox had been defeated, and that Angus had gained the victory. The young King, dismayed at the news, now urged his attendants to gallop forward, as much as he had formerly desired them to hang back. He charged them to prevent slaughter, and save lives, especially that of Lennox. Sir Andrew Wood, one of the King's cup-bearers, arrived in the field of battle time enough to save the Earl of Glencairn, who was still fighting gallantly by assistance of some strong ground, though he had scarce thirty men left alive; and Wood contrived to convey him safe out of the field. But Lennox, about whose safety the King was so anxious, was already no more. He had been slain, in cold blood, by that bloodthirsty man, Sir James Hamilton of Draphane who took him from the Laird of Pardivan, to whom he had surrendered himself. This deed seemed to flow from the brutal nature of the perpetrator, who took such a pleasure in shedding blood that he slashed with his own hand the faces of many of the prisoners. Arran, the father of this

ferocious man, bitterly lamented the fate of Lennox, who was his nephew. He was found mourning beside the body, over which he had spread his scarlet cloak. "The hardest, stoutest, and wisest man that Scotland bore," he said, "lies here slain."

After these two victories, the Earl of Angus seemed to be so firmly established in power that his followers set no bounds to their presumption, and his enemies were obliged to fly and hide themselves. Chancellor Beaton, disguised as a shepherd, fed sheep on Borgian-knowe, until he made his peace with the Earls of Angus and Arran, by great gifts, both in money and in church lands. Angus established around the King's person a guard of a hundred men of his own choice, commanded by Douglas of Parkhead; he made his brother George, whom James detested, Master of the Royal Household; and Archibald of Kilspindie, his uncle, Lord Treasurer of the Realm. But the close restraint in which the King found himself, only increased his eager desire to be rid of all the Douglasses together. Force having failed in two instances, James had recourse to stratagem.

He prevailed on his mother, Queen Margaret, to yield up to him the castle of Stirling, which was her jointure-house, and secretly to put it into the hands of a governor whom he could trust. This was done with much caution. Thus prepared with a place of refuge, James watched with anxiety an opportunity of flying to it; and he conducted himself with such apparent confidence toward Angus that the Douglasses were lulled into security, and concluded that the King was reconciled to his state of bondage, and had despaired of making his escape.

James was then residing at Falkland, a royal palace conveniently situated for hunting and hawking, in which he seemed to take great pleasure. The Earl of Angus at this period left the court for Lothian, where he had some urgent business—Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie went to Dundee, to visit a lady to whom he was attached—and George Douglas had gone to St. Andrews, to extort some further advantages from Chancellor Beaton, who was now

archbishop of that see, and primate of Scotland. There was thus none of the Douglasses left about the King's person, except Parkhead, with his guard of one hundred men, in whose vigilance the others confided.

The King thought the time favourable for his escape. To lay all suspicion asleep, he pretended he was to rise next morning at an early hour, for the purpose of hunting the stag. Douglas of Parkhead, suspecting nothing, retired to bed after placing his watch. But the King was no sooner in his private chamber than he called a trusty page, named John Hart:—

“Jockie,” said he, “dost thou love me?”

“Better than myself,” answered the domestic.

“And will you risk any thing for me?”

“My life, with pleasure,” said John Hart.

The King then explained his purpose, and dressing himself in the attire of a groom, he went with Hart to the stable, as if for the purpose of getting the horses ready for the next day's hunt. The guards, deceived by their appearance, gave them no interruption. At the stables three good horses were saddled and in readiness, under charge of a yeoman, or groom, whom the King had entrusted with his design.

James mounted with his two servants, and galloped, during the whole night, as eager as a bird just escaped from a cage. At daylight he reached the bridge of Stirling, which was the only mode of passing the river Forth, except by boats. It was defended by gates, which the King, after passing through them, ordered to be closed, and directed the passage to be watched. He was a weary man when he reached Stirling castle, where he was joyfully received by the governor, whom his mother had placed in that strong fortress. The draw-bridges were raised, the portcullises dropt, guards set, and every measure of defence and precaution resorted to. But the King was so much afraid of again falling into the hands of the Douglasses, that, tired as he was, he would not go to sleep until the keys of the castle were placed in his own keeping, and laid underneath his pillow.

In the morning there was great alarm at Falkland. Sir George Douglas had returned thither, on the night of the King's departure, about eleven o'clock. On his arrival, he inquired after the King, and was answered by the porter as well as the watchman upon guard, that he was sleeping in his chamber, as he intended to hunt early in the morning. Sir George therefore retired to rest in full security. But the next morning he learned different tidings. One Peter Carmichael, bailie of Abernethy, knocked at the door of his chamber, and asked him if he knew "what the King was doing that morning?"

"He is in his chamber asleep," said Sir George.

"You are mistaken," answered Carmichael; "he passed the bridge of Stirling this last night."

On hearing this, Douglas started up in haste, went to the King's chamber, and knocked for admittance. When no answer was returned, he caused the door to be forced, and when he found the apartment empty, he cried, "Treason!— The King is gone, and none knows whither." Then he sent post to his brother, the Earl of Angus, and despatched messengers in every direction, to seek the King, and to assemble the Douglasses.

When the truth became known, the adherents of Angus rode in a body to Stirling, but the King was so far from desiring to receive them, that he threatened, by sound of trumpet, to declare any of the name of Douglas a traitor who should approach within twelve miles of his person, or who should presume to meddle with the administration of government. Some of the Douglasses inclined to resist this proclamation; but the Earl of Angus and his brother resolved to obey it, and withdrew to Linlithgow.

Soon afterwards, the King assembled around him the numerous nobility, who envied the power of Angus and Arran, or had suffered injuries at their hands; and, in open parliament, accused them of treason, declaring, that he had never been sure of his life all the while that he was in their power. A sentence of forfeiture was, therefore, passed against the Earl of Angus, and he was driven into exile, with all his friends and kinsmen. And thus the

Red Douglasses, of the house of Angus, shared almost the same fate with the Black Douglasses, of the elder branch of that mighty house; with this difference, that as they had never risen so high, so they did not fall so irretrievably; for the Earl of Angus lived to return and enjoy his estates in Scotland, where he again played a distinguished part. But this was not till after the death of James V., who retained, during his whole life, an implacable resentment against the Douglasses, and never permitted one of the name to settle in Scotland while he lived.

James persevered in this resolution even under circumstances which rendered his unrelenting resentment ungenerous. Archibald Douglas of Kilspindie, the Earl of Angus's uncle, had been a personal favourite of the King before the disgrace of his family. He was so much recommended to James by his great strength, manly appearance, and skill in every kind of warlike exercise, that he was wont to call him his Graysteil, after the name of a champion in a romance then popular. Archibald, becoming rather an old man, and tired of his exile in England, resolved to try the King's mercy. He thought that as they had been so well acquainted formerly, and as he had never offended James personally, he might find favour from their old intimacy. He therefore threw himself in the King's way one day as he returned from hunting in the park at Stirling. It was several years since James had seen him, but he knew him at a great distance, by his firm and stately step, and said, "Yonder is my Graysteil, Archibald of Kilspindie." But when they met, he showed no appearance of recognizing his old servant. Douglas turned, and still hoping to obtain a glance of favourable recollection, ran along by the King's side; and although James trotted his horse hard against the hill, and Douglas wore a heavy shirt of mail under his clothes, for fear of assassination, yet Graysteil was at the castle gate as soon as the King. James passed him, and entered the castle; but Douglas exhausted with exertion, sat down at the gate and asked for a cup of wine. The hatred of the King against the name of Douglas was so well known, that no domestic about the

court dared procure for the old warrior even this trifling refreshment. The King blamed, indeed, his servants for their discourtesy, and even said, that but for his oaths never to employ a Douglas, he would have received Archibald of Kilspindie into his service, as he had formerly known him a man of great ability. Yet he sent his commands to his poor Graysteil to retire to France, where he died heart-broken soon afterwards. Even Henry VIII. of England, himself of an unforgiving temper, blamed the implacability of James on this occasion, and quoted an old proverb,—

“ A King’s face
Should give grace.”

Freed from the stern control of the Douglas family, James V. now began to exercise the government in person, and displayed most of the qualities of a wise and good prince. He was handsome in his person, and resembled his father in the fondness for military exercises, and the spirit of chivalrous honour which James IV. loved to display. He also inherited his father’s love of justice, and his desire to establish and enforce wise and equal laws, which should protect the weak against the oppression of the great. It was easy enough to make laws, but to put them in vigorous exercise was of much greater difficulty; and in his attempt to accomplish this laudable purpose, James often incurred the ill-will of the more powerful nobles. He was a well educated and accomplished man; and like his ancestor, James I., was a poet and a musician. He had, however, his defects. He avoided his father’s failing of profusion, having no hoarded treasures to employ on pomp and show; but he rather fell into the opposite fault, being of a temper too parsimonious; and though he loved state and display, he endeavoured to gratify that taste as economically as possible, so that he has been censured as rather close and covetous. He was also, though the foibles seem inconsistent, fond of pleasure, and disposed to too much indulgence. It must be added, that when provoked, he was unrelenting even to cruelty; for which he had some apology, considering the ferocity of the

subjects over whom he reigned. But, on the whole, James V. was an amiable man, and a good sovereign.

His first care was to bring the Borders of Scotland to some degree of order. These, as you were formerly told, were inhabited by tribes of men, forming each a different clan, as they were called, and obeying no orders, save those which were given by their chiefs. These chiefs were supposed to represent the first founder of the name, or family. The attachment of the clansmen to the chief was very great; indeed, they paid respect to no one else. In this the Borderers agreed with the Highlanders, as also in their love of plunder, and neglect of the general laws of the country. But the Border men wore no tartan dress, and served almost always on horseback, whereas the Highlanders acted always on foot. You will also remember that the Borderers spoke the Scottish language, and not the Gaelic tongue used by the mountaineers.

The situation of these clans on the frontiers exposed them to constant war; so that they thought of nothing else but of collecting bands of their followers together, and making incursions, without much distinction, on the English, on the Lowland (or inland) Scots, or upon each other. They paid little respect either to times of truce or treaties of peace, but exercised their depredations without regard to either, and often occasioned wars betwixt England and Scotland which would not otherwise have taken place.

It is said of a considerable family on the Borders, that when they had consumed all the cattle about the castle, a pair of spurs was placed on the table in a covered dish, as a hint that they must ride out and fetch more. The chiefs and leading men told down their daughters' portions according to the plunder which they were able to collect in the course of a Michaelmas moon, when its prolonged light allowed them opportunity for their free-booting excursions. They were very brave in battle, but in time of peace they were a pest to their Scottish neighbours. As their insolence had risen to a high pitch after the field of Flodden had thrown the country into confusion, James V. resolved to take very severe measures against them.

His first step was to secure the persons of the principal chieftains by whom these disorders were privately encouraged. The Earl of Bothwell, the Lord Home, Lord Maxwell, Scott of Buccleuch, Ker of Fairnielurst, and other powerful chiefs who might have opposed the King's purposes, were seized, and imprisoned in separate fortresses in the inland country.

James then assembled an army, in which warlike purposes were united with those of silvan sport; for he ordered all the gentlemen in the wild districts which he intended to visit, to bring in their best dogs, as if his only purpose had been to hunt the deer in those desolate regions. This was intended to prevent the Borderers from taking the alarm, in which case they would have retreated into their mountains and fastnesses, from whence it would have been difficult to dislodge them.

These men had indeed no distinct idea of the offences which they had committed, and consequently no apprehension of the King's displeasure against them. The laws had been so long silent in that remote and disorderly country, that the outrages which were practised by the strong against the weak seemed to the perpetrators the natural course of society, and to present nothing that was worthy of punishment.

Thus, as the King, in the beginning of his expedition, suddenly approached the castle of Piers Cockburn of Henderland, that baron was in the act of providing a great entertainment to welcome him, when James caused him to be suddenly seized on, and executed. Adam Scott of Tushielaw, called the King of the Border, met the same fate. But an event of greater importance was the fate of John Armstrong, of Gilnockie, near Langholm.

This free-booting chief had risen to great consequence, and the whole neighbouring district of England paid him *black mail*, that is, a sort of tribute, in consideration of which he forebore plundering them. He had a high idea of his own importance, and seems to have been unconscious of having merited any severe usage at the King's hands. On the contrary, he came to meet his sovereign at a place

about ten miles from Hawick, called Carlinrigg chapel, richly dressed, and having with him twenty-four gentlemen, his constant retinue, as well attired as himself. The King, incensed to see a free-booter so gallantly equipped, commanded him instantly to be led to execution, saying, "What wants this knave, save a crown, to be as magnificent as a king?" John Armstrong made great offers for his life, offering to maintain himself, with forty men, ready to serve the King at a moment's notice, at his own expense; engaging never to hurt or injure any Scottish subject, as indeed had never been his practice; and undertaking, that there was not a man in England, of whatever degree, duke, earl, lord, or baron, but he would engage, within a short time, to present him to the King, dead or alive. But when the King would listen to none of his offers, the robber chief said, very proudly, "I am but a fool to ask grace at a graceless face; but had I guessed you would have used me thus, I would have kept the Border-side, in despite of the King of England and you both; for I well know that King Henry would give the weight of my best horse in gold to know that I am sentenced to die this day."

John Armstrong was led to execution, with all his men, and hanged without mercy. The people of the inland counties were glad to be rid of him; but on the Borders he was both missed and mourned, as a brave warrior, and a stout man-at-arms against England.

Such were the effects of the terror struck by these general executions, that James was said to have made "the rush bush keep the cow;" that is to say, that even in this lawless part of the country, men dared no longer make free with property, and cattle might remain on their pastures unwatched. James was also enabled to draw profit from the lands which the crown possessed near the Borders, and is said to have had ten thousand sheep at one time grazing in Ettrick forest, under the keeping of one Andrew Bell, who gave the King as good an account of the profits of the flock as if they had been grazing in the bounds of Fife, then the most civilized part of Scotland.

On the other hand, the Borders of Scotland were greatly

weakened by the destruction of so many brave men, who, notwithstanding their lawless course of life, were true defenders of their country; and there is reason to censure the extent to which James carried his severity; as being to a certain degree inpolitic and beyond doubt cruel and excessive.

In the like manner James proceeded against the Highland chiefs; and by executions, forfeitures, and other severe measures, he brought the Northern mountaineers, as he had already done those of the South, into comparative subjection. He then set at liberty the Border chiefs, and others whom he had imprisoned, lest they should have offered any hindrance to the course of his justice.

As these fiery chieftains, after this severe chastisement, could no longer as formerly attack each other's castles and lands, they were forced to vent their deadly animosities in duels, which were frequently fought in the King's presence, his royal permission being first obtained. Thus, Douglas of Drumlanrig and Charteris of Amisfield did battle together in presence of the King, each having accused the other of high treason. They fought on foot with huge two-handed swords. Drumlanrig was somewhat blind, or short-sighted, and being in great fury, struck about him without seeing where he hit, and the Laird of Amisfield was not more successful, for his sword broke in the encounter: upon this, the King caused the battle to cease, and the combatants were with difficulty separated. Thus the King gratified these unruly barons, by permitting them to fight in his own presence, in order to induce them to remain in peace elsewhere.

James V., like his father James IV., had a custom of going about the country disguised as a private person, in order that he might hear complaints which might not otherwise reach his ears, and, perhaps, that he might enjoy amusements which he could not have partaken of in his avowed royal character. This is also said to have been a custom of James IV., his father, and several adventures are related of what befell them on such occasions. One or two of these narratives may help to enliven our story.

When James V. travelled in disguise, he used a name which was known only to some of his principal nobility and attendants. He was called the Goodman (the tenant, that is) of Ballengiech. Ballengiech is a steep pass which leads down behind the castle of Stirling. Once upon a time when the court was feasting in Stirling, the King sent for some venison from the neighbouring hills. The deer were killed, and put on horses' backs to be transported to Stirling. Unluckily they had to pass the castle gates of Arnpryor, belonging to a chief of the Buchanans, who chanced to have a considerable number of guests with him. It was late, and the company were rather short of victuals, though they had more than enough of liquor. The chief, seeing so much fat venison passing his very door, seized on it; and to the expostulations of the keepers, who told him it belonged to King James, he answered insolently, that if James was King in Scotland, he, Buchanan, was King in Kippen; being the name of the district in which the castle of Arnpryor lay. On hearing what had happened, the King got on horseback, and rode instantly from Stirling to Buchanan's house, where he found a strong fierce-looking Highlander, with an axe on his shoulder, standing sentinel at the door. This grim warder refused the King admittance, saying, that the Laird of Arnpryor was at dinner, and would not be disturbed. "Yet go up to the company, my good friend," said the King, "and tell him that the Goodman of Ballengiech is come to feast with the King of Kippen." The porter went grumbling into the house, and told his master that there was a fellow with a red beard at the gate, who called himself the Goodman of Ballengiech, who said he was come to dine with the King of Kippen. As soon as Buchanan heard these words, he knew that the King was come in person, and hastened down to kneel at James's feet, and to ask forgiveness for his insolent behaviour. But the King, who only meant to give him a fright, forgave him freely, and, going into the castle, feasted on his own venison which Buchanan had intercepted. Buchanan of Arnpryor was ever afterwards called the King of Kippen.

Upon another occasion, King James, being alone and in disguise, fell into a quarrel with some gypsies, or other vagrants, and was assaulted by four or five of them. This chanced to be very near the bridge of Cramond; so the King got on the bridge, which, as it was high and narrow, enabled him to defend himself with his sword against the number of persons by whom he was attacked. There was a poor man thrashing corn in a barn near by, who came out on hearing the noise of the scuffle, and seeing one man defending himself against numbers, gallantly took the King's part with his flail, to such good purpose, that the gypsies were obliged to fly. The husbandman then took the King into the barn, brought him a towel and water to wash the blood from his face and hands, and finally walked with him a little way towards Edinburgh, in case he should again be attacked. On the way, the King asked his companion what and who he was. The labourer answered, that his name was John Howieson, and that he was a bondsman on the farm of Braehead, near Cramond, which belonged to the King of Scotland. James then asked the poor man, if there was any wish in the world which he would particularly desire should be gratified; and honest John confessed, he should think himself the happiest man in Scotland were he but proprietor of the farm on which he wrought as a labourer. He then asked the King, in turn, who *he* was; and James replied, as usual, that he was the Goodman of Ballengiech, a poor man who had a small appointment about the palace; but he added, that if John Howieson would come to see him on the next Sunday, he would endeavour to repay his manifold assistance, and, at least, give him the pleasure of seeing the royal apartments.

John put on his best clothes, as you may suppose, and appearing at a postern gate of the palace, enquired for the Goodman of Ballengiech. The King had given orders that he should be admitted; and John found his friend, the goodman, in the same disguise which he had formerly worn. The King, still preserving the character of an inferior officer of the household, conducted John Howieson

from one apartment of the palace to another, and was amused with his wonder and his remarks. At length, James asked his visitor if he should like to see the King; to which John replied, nothing would delight him so much, if he could do so without giving offence. The Goodman of Ballengiech, of course, undertook that the King would not be angry. "But," said John, "how am I to know his Grace from the nobles who will be all about him?"—"Easily," replied his companion; "all the others will be uncovered—the King alone will wear his hat or bonnet."

So speaking, King James introduced the countryman into a great hall, which was filled by the nobility and officers of the crown. John was a little frightened, and drew close to his attendant; but was still unable to distinguish the King. "I told you that you should know him by his wearing his hat," said the conductor. "Then," said John, after he had again looked round the room, "it must be either you or me, for all but us two are bare-headed."

The King laughed at John's fancy; and that the good yeoman might have occasion for mirth also, he made him a present of the farm of Braehead, which he had wished so much to possess, on condition that John Howieson, or his successors, should be ready to present a ewer and basin for the King to wash his hands, when his Majesty should come to Holyrood palace, or should pass the bridge of Cramond. Accordingly, in the year 1822, when George IV. came to Scotland, the descendant of John Howieson of Braehead, who still possesses the estate which was given to his ancestor, appeared at a solemn festival, and offered his Majesty water from a silver ewer, that he might perform the service by which he held his lands.

James V. was very fond of hunting, and, when he pursued that amusement in the Highlands, he used to wear the peculiar dress of that country, having a long and wide Highland shirt, and a jacket of tartan velvet, with plaid hose, and every thing else corresponding. The accounts for these are in the books of his chamberlain, still preserved.

On one occasion, when the King had an ambassador of the Pope along with him, with various foreigners of distinction, they were splendidly entertained by the Earl of Athole in a huge and singular rustic palace. It was built of timber, in the midst of a great meadow, and surrounded by moats, or fosses, full of the most delicate fish. It was enclosed and defended by towers, as if it had been a regular castle, and had within it many apartments, which were decked with flowers and branches, so that in treading them one seemed to be in a garden. Here were all kinds of game, and other provisions in abundance, with many cooks to make them ready, and plenty of the most costly spices and wines. The Italian ambassador was greatly surprised to see, amongst rocks and wildernesses, which seem to be the very extremity of the world, such good lodging and so magnificent an entertainment. But what surprised him most of all, was to see the Highlanders set fire to the wooden castle as soon as the hunting was over, and the King in the act of departing. "Such is the constant practice of our Highlanders," said James to the ambassador; "however well they may be lodged over night, they always burn their lodging before they leave it." By this the King intimated the predatory and lawless habits displayed by these mountaineers.

The reign of James V. was not alone distinguished by his personal adventures and pastimes, but is honourably remembered on account of wise laws made for the government of his people, and for restraining the crimes and violence which were frequently practised among them; especially those of assassination, burning of houses, and driving of cattle, the usual and ready means by which powerful chiefs avenged themselves of their feudal enemies.

For the decision of civil questions, James V. invented and instituted what is called the College of Justice, being the Supreme Court of Scotland in civil affairs. It consisted of fourteen judges (half clergy, half laity), and a president, who heard and decided causes. A certain number of learned men, trained to understand the laws, were appointed to the task of pleading the causes of such as had

law-suits before these judges, who constituted what is popularly termed the Court of Session. These men were called advocates; and this was the first establishment of a body, regularly educated to the law, which has ever since been regarded in Scotland as an honourable profession, and has produced many great men.

This active and patriotic Prince ordered the mineral wealth of Scotland to be also enquired into. He obtained miners from Germany, who extracted both silver and gold from the mines of Leadhills, in the upper part of Clydesdale. The gold was of fine quality, and found in quantity sufficient to supply metal for a very elegant gold coin, which, bearing on one side the head of James V. wearing a bonnet, has been thence called the Bonnet-piece. It is said, that upon one occasion the King invited the ambassadors of Spain, France, and other foreign countries, to hunt with him in Crawford Moor, the district in which lie the mines I have just mentioned. They dined in the castle of Crawford, a rude old fortress. The King made some apology for the dinner, which was composed of the game they had killed during the hunting and hawking of the day. but he assured his guests that the dessert would make them some amends, as he had given directions that it should consist of the finest fruits which the country afforded. The foreigners looked at each other in surprise, on hearing the King talk of fruits being produced amidst the black moors and barren mountains around them. But the dessert made its appearance in the shape of a number of covered saucers, one of which was placed before each guest, and being examined was found full of gold bonnet-pieces which they were desired to accept as the fruit produced by the mountains of Crawford Moor. This new sort of dessert was no doubt as acceptable as the most delicate fruits of a southern climate. The mines of the country are now wrought only for lead, of which they produce still a very large quantity.

Although, as we have mentioned, James was a good economist, he did not neglect the cultivation of the fine

arts. He rebuilt the palace of Linlithgow, which is on a most magnificent plan, and made additions to that of Stirling. He encouraged several excellent poets and learned men, and his usual course of life appears to have been joyous and happy. He was himself a poet of some skill, and he permitted great freedom to the rhymers of his time, in addressing verses to him, some of which conveyed severe censures of his government, and other satires on his foibles.

The disgraceful news of the battle, or rather the rout of Solway, filled up the measure of the King's despair and desolation. He shut himself up in the palace of Falkland, and refused to listen to any consolation. A burning fever, the consequence of his grief and shame, seized on the unfortunate monarch. They brought him tidings that his wife had given birth to a daughter; but he only replied, "Is it so?" reflecting on the alliance which had placed the Stewart family on the throne; "then God's will be done. It came with a lass, and it will go with a lass." With these words, presaging the extinction of his house, he made a signal of adieu to his courtiers, spoke little more, but turned his face to the wall, and died of the most melancholy of all diseases, a broken heart. He was scarcely thirty-one years old; in the very prime, therefore, of life.

THE LADY OF THE LAKE

CANTO FIRST

The Chase

- HARP of the North! that mouldering long hast hung
On the witch-elm that shades Saint Fillan's spring,
And down the fitful breeze thy numbers flung,
Till envious ivy did around thee cling,
5 Muffling with verdant ringlet every string,—
O Minstrel Harp, still must thine accents sleep?
Mid rustling leaves and fountains murmuring,
Still must thy sweeter sounds their silence keep,
Nor bid a warrior smile, nor teach a maid to weep?
- 10 Not thus, in ancient days of Caledon,
Was thy voice mute amid the festal crowd,
When lay of hopeless love, or glory won,
Aroused the fearful, or subdued the proud.
At each according pause, was heard aloud
15 Thine ardent symphony sublime and high!
Fair dames and crested chiefs attention bow'd;
For still the burden of thy minstrelsy
Was Knighthood's dauntless deed, and Beauty's match-
less eye.
- O wake once more! how rude soe'er the hand
20 That ventures o'er thy magic maze to stray;
O wake once more! though scarce my skill command
Some feeble echoing of thine earlier lay:
Though harsh and faint, and soon to die away,

And all unworthy of thy nobler strain,
25 Yet if one heart throb higher at its sway,
The wizard note has not been touch'd in vain.
Then silent be no more! Enchantress, wake again!

I

The stag at eve had drunk his fill,
Where danced the moon on Monan's rill,
And deep his midnight lair had made
In lone Glenartney's hazel shade;
5 But, when the sun his beacon red
Had kindled on Benvoirlich's head,
The deep-mouth'd bloodhound's heavy bay
Resounded up the rocky way,
And faint, from farther distance borne,
10 Were heard the clanging hoof and horn.

II

As Chief, who hears his warder call,
"To arms! the foemen storm the wall,"
The antler'd monarch of the waste
Sprung from his heathery couch in haste.
5 But, ere his fleet career he took,
The dew-drops from his flanks he shook;
Like crested leader proud and high,
Toss'd his beam'd frontlet to the sky;
A moment gazed adown the dale,
10 A moment snuff'd the tainted gale,
A moment listen'd to the cry,
That thicken'd as the chase drew nigh;
Then, as the headmost foes appear'd,
With one brave bound the copse he clear'd,
15 And, stretching forward free and far,
Sought the wild heaths of Uam-Var.

III

- Yell'd on the view the opening pack;
Rock, glen, and cavern, paid them back;
To many a mingled sound at once
The awaken'd mountain gave response.
5 A hundred dogs bay'd deep and strong,
Clatter'd a hundred steeds along,
Their peal the merry horns rung out,
A hundred voices join'd the shout;
With hark and whoop and wild halloo,
10 No rest Benvoirlich's echoes knew.
Far from the tumult fled the roe,
Close in her covert cower'd the doe,
The falcon, from her cairn on high,
Cast on the rout a wondering eye,
15 Till far beyond her piercing ken
The hurricane had swept the glen.
Faint, and more faint, its failing din
Return'd from cavern, cliff, and linn,
And silence settled, wide and still,
20 On the lone wood and mighty hill,

IV

- Less loud the sounds of silvan war
Disturb'd the heights of Uam-Var,
And roused the cavern, where, 't is told,
A giant made his den of old;
5 For ere that steep ascent was won,
High in his pathway hung the sun,
And many a gallant, stay'd perforce,
Was fain to breathe his faltering horse,
And of the trackers of the deer,
10 Scarce half the lessening pack was near;
So shrewdly on the mountain side,
Had the bold burst their mettle tried.

V

- The noble stag was pausing now
 Upon the mountain's southern brow,
 Where broad extended, far beneath,
 The varied realms of fair Menteith.
 5 With anxious eye he wander'd o'er
 Mountain and meadow, moss and moor,
 And ponder'd refuge from his toil,
 By far Lochard or Aberfoyle.
 But nearer was the copsewood grey,
 10 That waved and wept on Loch-Achray,
 And mingled with the pine-trees blue
 On the bold cliffs of Benvenue.
 Fresh vigour with the hope return'd,
 With flying foot the heath he spurn'd,
 15 Held westward with unwearied race,
 And left behind the panting chase.

VI

- 'T were long to tell what steeds gave o'er,
 As swept the hunt through Cambusmore:
 What reins were tighten'd in despair,
 When rose Benledi's ridge in air;
 5 Who flagg'd upon Bochastle's heath,
 Who shunn'd to stem the flooded Teith,—
 For twice that day, from shore to shore,
 The gallant stag swam stoutly o'er.
 Few were the stragglers, following far,
 10 That reach'd the lake of Vennachar;
 And when the Brigg of Turk was won,
 The headmost horseman rode alone.

VII

Alone, but with unbated zeal,
 That horseman plied the seourge and steel;
 For jaded now, and spent with toil,
 Emboss'd with foam, and dark with soil,

- 5 While every gasp with sobs he drew,
The labouring stag strain'd full in view.
Two dogs of black Saint Hubert's breed,
Unmatch'd for courage, breath, and speed,
Fast on his flying traces came,
10 And all but won that desperate game;
For, scarce a spear's length from his haunch,
Vindictive toil'd the bloodhounds stanch;
Nor nearer might the dogs attain,
Nor farther might the quarry strain.
15 Thus up the margin of the lake,
Between the preeipice and brake,
O'er stock and rock their race they take.

VIII

- The Hunter mark'd that mountain high,
The lone lake's western boundary,
And deem'd the stag must turn to bay,
Where that huge rampart barr'd the way;
5 Already glorying in the prize,
Measured his antlers with his eyes;
For the death-wound and death-halloo,
Muster'd his breath, his whinyard drew;—
But thundering as he came prepared,
10 With ready arm and weapon bared,
The wily quarry shunn'd the shock,
And turn'd him from the opposing rock;
Then, dashing down a darksome glen,
Soon lost to hound and Hunter's ken,
15 In the deep Trosachs' wildest nook
His solitary refuge took.
There, while close couch'd, the thicket shed
Cold dews and wild-flowers on his head,
He heard the baffled dogs in vain
20 Rave through the hollow pass amain,
Chiding the rocks that yell'd again.

IX

- Close on the hounds the Hunter came,
 To cheer them on the vanish'd game;
 But, stumbling in the rugged dell,
 The gallant horse exhausted fell.
 5 The impatient rider strove in vain
 To rouse him with the spur and rein,
 For the good steed, his labours o'er,
 Stretch'd his stiff limbs, to rise no more;
 Then, touch'd with pity and remorse,
 10 He sorrow'd o'er the expiring horse.
 "I little thought, when first thy rein
 I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
 That Highland eagle e'er should feed
 On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed!
 15 Woe worth the chase, woe worth the day,
 That costs thy life, my gallant grey!"

X

- Then through the dell his horn resounds,
 From vain pursuit to call the hounds.
 Back limp'd, with slow and crippled pace,
 The sulky leaders of the chase;
 5 Close to their master's side they press'd,
 With drooping tail and humbled crest;
 But still the dingle's hollow throat
 Prolong'd the swelling bugle-note.
 The owlets started from their dream,
 10 The eagles answered with their scream,
 Round and around the sounds were cast,
 Till echo seem'd an answering blast;
 And on the Hunter hied his way,
 To join some comrades of the day;
 15 Yet often paused, so strange the road,
 So wondrous were the scenes it show'd.

XI

- The western waves of ebbing day
Roll'd o'er the glen their level way;
Each purple peak, each flinty spire,
Was bathed in floods of living fire.
5 But not a setting beam could glow
Within the dark ravines below,
Where twined the path in shadow hid,
Round many a rocky pyramid,
Shooting abruptly from the dell
10 Its thunder-splinter'd pinnacle;
Round many an insulated mass,
The native bulwarks of the pass,
Huge as the tower which builders vain
Presumptuous piled on Shinar's plain.
15 The rocky summits, split and rent,
Form'd turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seem'd fantastically set
With cupola or minaret,
Wild crests as pagod ever deck'd,
20 Or mosque of Eastern architect.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lack'd they many a banner fair;
For, from their shiver'd brows display'd,
Far o'er the unfathomable glade,
25 All twinkling with the dewdrops sheen,
The brier-rose fell in streamers green,
And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes,
Waved in the west-wind's summer sighs.

XII

- Boon nature scatter'd, free and wild,
Each plant or flower, the mountain's child.
Here eglantine embalm'd the air,
Hawthorn and hazel mingled there;
5 The primrose pale and violet flower,
Found in each cliff a narrow bower;

- Fox-glove and night-shade, side by side,
Emblems of punishment and pride,
Group'd their dark hues with every stain
10 The weather-beaten crags retain.
With boughs that quaked at every breath,
Grey birch and aspen wept beneath;
Aloft, the ash and warrior oak
Cast anchor in the rifted rock;
15 And, higher yet, the pine-tree hung
His shatter'd trunk, and frequent flung,
Where seem'd the cliffs to meet on high,
His bows athwart the narrow'd sky.
Highest of all, where white peaks glanced,
20 Where glist'ning streamers waved and danced
The wanderer's eye could barely view
The summer heaven's delicious blue;
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream.

XIII

- Onward, amid the copse 'gan peep
A narrow inlet, still and deep,
Affording scarce such breadth of brim
As served the wild duck's brood to swim.
5 Lost for a space, through thickets veering,
But broader when again appearing,
Tall rocks and tufted knolls their face
Could on the dark-blue mirror trace;
And farther as the Hunter stray'd,
10 Still broader sweep its channels made.
The shaggy mounds no longer stood,
Emerging from entangled wood,
But, wave-encircled, seem'd to float,
Like castle girdled with its moat;
15 Yet broader floods extending still
Divide them from their parent hill,
Till each, retiring, claims to be
An islet in an inland sea.

XIV

- And now, to issue from the glen,
No pathway meets the wanderer's ken,
Unless he climb, with footing nice,
A far projecting precipice.
- 5 The broom's tough roots his ladder made,
The hazel saplings lent their aid;
And thus an airy point he won,
Where, gleaming with the setting sun,
One burnish'd sheet of living gold,
- 10 Loch Katrine lay beneath him roll'd,
In all her length far winding lay,
With promontory, creek, and bay,
And islands that, empurpled bright,
Floated amid the livelier light,
- 15 And mountains, that like giants stand,
To sentinel enchanted land.
High on the south, huge Benvenue
Down to the lake in masses threw
Crag, knolls, and mounds, confusedly hurl'd,
- 20 The fragments of an earlier world;
A wildering forest feather'd o'er
His ruin'd sides and summit hoar,
While on the north, through middle air,
Ben-an heaved high his forehead bare.

XV

- From the steep promontory gazed
The stranger, raptured and amazed,
And, "What a scene were here," he cried,
"For princely pomp, or churchman's pride!"
- 5 On this bold brow, a lordly tower;
In that soft vale, a lady's bower;
On yonder meadow, far away,
The turrets of a cloister grey;
How blithely might the bugle-horn
- 10 Chide, on the lake, the lingering morn!

- How sweet, at eve, the lover's lute
 Chime, when the groves were still and mute!
 And, when the midnight moon should lave
 Her forehead in the silver wave,
 15 How solemn on the ear would come
 The holy matin's distant hum,
 While the deep peal's commanding tone
 Should wake, in yonder islet lone,
 A sainted hermit from his cell,
 20 To drop a bead with every knell—
 And bugle, lute, and bell, and all,
 Should each bewilder'd stranger call
 To friendly feast and lighted hall.

XVI

- "Blithe were it then to wander here!
 But now,—beshrew yon nimble deer,—
 Like that same hermit's, thin and spare,
 The copse must give my evening fare;
 5 Some mossy bank my couch must be,
 Some rustling oak my canopy.
 Yet pass we that; the war and chase
 Give little choice of resting-place;—
 A summer night, in greenwood spent,
 10 Were but to-morrow's merriment:
 But hosts may in these wilds abound,
 Such as are better miss'd than found;
 To meet with Highland plunderers here
 Were worse than loss of steed or deer.—
 15 I am alone;—my bugle-strain
 May call some straggler of the train;
 Or, fall the worst that may betide,
 Ere now this falchion has been tried."

XVII

But scarce again his horn he wound,
 When lo! forth starting at the sound,

- From underneath an aged oak,
 That slanted from the islet rock,
 5 A damsel guider of its way,
 A little skiff shot to the bay,
 That round the promontory steep
 Led its deep line in graceful sweep,
 Eddying, in almost viewless wave,
 10 The weeping willow twig to lave,
 And kiss, with whispering sound and slow,
 The beach of pebbles bright as snow.
 The boat had touch'd this silver strand,
 Just as the Hunter left his stand,
 15 And stood conceal'd amid the brake,
 To view this Lady of the Lake.
 The maiden paused, as if again
 She thought to catch the distant strain.
 With head up-raised, and look intent,
 20 And eye and ear attentive bent,
 And locks flung back, and lips apart,
 Like monument of Grecian art,
 In listening mood, she seem'd to stand,
 The guardian Naiad of the strand.

XVIII

- And ne'er did Grecian chisel trace
 A Nymph, a Naiad, or a Grace,
 Of finer form, or lovelier face!
 What though the sun, with ardent frown,
 5 Had slightly tinged her cheek with brown,—
 The sportive toil, which, short and light,
 Had dyed her glowing hue so bright,
 Served too in hastier swell to show
 Short glimpses of a breast of snow:
 10 What though no rule of courtly grace
 To measured mood had train'd her pace,—
 A foot more light, a step more true,
 Ne'er from the heath-flower dash'd the dew;

- E'en the slight harebell raised its head,
15 Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,—
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The listener held his breath to hear!

XIX

- A chieftain's daughter seem'd the maid;
Her satin snood, her silken plaid,
Her golden brooch, such birth betray'd
And seldom was a snood amid
5 Such wild luxuriant ringlets hid,
Whose glossy black to shame might bring
The plumage of the raven's wing;
And seldom o'er a breast so fair,
Mantled a plaid with modest care,
10 And never brooch the folds combined
Above a heart more good and kind.
Her kindness and her worth to spy,
You need but gaze on Ellen's eye;
Not Katrine, in her mirror blue
15 Gives back the shaggy banks more true,
Than every free-born glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast;
Whether joy danced in her dark eye,
Or woe or pity claim'd a sigh,
20 Or filial love was glowing there,
Or meek devotion pour'd a prayer,
Or tale of injury call'd forth
The indignant spirit of the North.
One only passion unreveal'd,
25 With maiden pride the maid conceal'd,
Yet not less purely felt the flame;—
O! need I tell that passion's name?

XX

- Impatient of the silent horn,
Now on the gale her voice was borne:—
“Father!” she cried; the rocks around
Loved to prolong the gentle sound.
5 Awhile she paused, no answer came;—
“Malcolm, was thine the blast?” the name
Less resolutely utter’d fell,
The echoes could not catch the swell.
“A stranger I,” the Huntsman said,
10 Advancing from the hazel shade.
The maid, alarm’d, with hasty oar
Push’d her light shallop from the shore,
And when a space was gain’d between,
Closer she drew her bosom’s screen;—
15 (So forth the startled swan would swing,
So turn to prune his ruffled wing.)
Then safe, though flutter’d and amazed,
She paused, and on the stranger gazed.
Not his the form, nor his the eye,
20 That youthful maidens wont to fly.

XXI

- On his bold visage middle age
Had slightly press’d its signet sage,
Yet had not quench’d the open truth
And fiery vehemence of youth;
5 Forward and frolic glee was there,
The will to do, the soul to dare,
The sparkling glance, soon blown to fire,
Of hasty love, or headlong ire.
His limbs were cast in manly mould,
10 For hardy sports or contest bold;
And though in peaceful garb array’d,
And weaponless, except his blade,

- His stately mien as well implied
 A high-born heart, a martial pride,
 15 As if a Baron's crest he wore,
 And sheathed in armour trode the shore.
 Slighting the petty need he show'd,
 He told of his benighted road;
 His ready speech flow'd fair and free,
 20 In phrase of gentlest courtesy;
 Yet seem'd that tone, and gesture bland,
 Less used to sue than to command.

XXII

- Awhile the maid the stranger eyed,
 And, reassured, at length replied,
 That Highland halls were open still
 To wilder'd wanderers of the hill.
 5 "Nor think you unexpected come
 To yon lone isle, our desert home;
 Before the heath had lost the dew,
 This morn, a couch was pull'd for you;
 On yonder mountain's purple head
 10 Have ptarmigan and heath-cock bled,
 And our broad nets have swept the mere,
 To furnish forth your evening cheer."—
 "Now, by the rood, my lovely maid,
 Your courtesy has err'd," he said;
 15 "No right have I to claim, misplaced,
 The welcome of expected guest.
 A wanderer, here by fortune tost,
 My way, my friends, my courser lost,
 I ne'er before, believe me, fair,
 20 Have ever drawn your mountain air,
 Till on this lake's romantic strand,
 I found a fay in fairy land!"—

XXIII

- "I well believe," the maid replied,
 As her light skiff approach'd the side,—
 "I well believe, that ne'er before
 Your foot has trod Loeh Katrine's shore;
 5 But yet, as far as yesternight,
 Old Allan-bane foretold your plight,—
 A grey-haired sire, whose eye intent
 Was on the vision'd future bent.
 He saw your steed, a dappled grey,
 10 Lie dead beneath the birchen way;
 Painted exact your form and mien,
 Your hunting suit of Lincoln green,
 That tassell'd horn so gaily gilt,
 That falchion's crooked blade and hilt,
 15 That cap with heron plumage trim,
 And yon two hounds so dark and grim.
 He bade that all should ready be,
 To grace a guest of fair degree;
 But light I held his prophecy,
 20 And deem'd it was my father's horn,
 Whose echoes o'er the lake were borne."

XXIV

- The stranger smiled:—"Since to your home
 A destined errant knight I come,
 Announced by prophet sooth and old,
 Doom'd, doubtless, for achievement bold,
 5 I'll lightly front each high emprise,
 For one kind glance of those bright eyes.
 Permit me, first, the task to guide
 Your fairy frigate o'er the tide."
 The maid, with smile suppress'd and sly,
 10 The toil unwonted saw him try;
 For seldom, sure, if e'er before,
 His noble hand had grasped an oar:
 Yet with main strength his strokes he drew,
 And o'er the lake the shallop flew;

- 15 With heads erect, and whimpering cry,
The hounds behind their passage ply.
Nor frequent does the bright oar break
The dark'ning mirror of the lake,
Until the rocky isle they reach,
20 And moor their shallop on the beach.

XXV

- The stranger view'd the shore around;
'Twas all so close with copsewood bound,
Nor track nor pathway might declare
That human foot frequented there,
5 Until the mountain-maiden show'd
A clambering unsuspected road,
That winded through the tangled screen,
And open'd on a narrow green,
Where weeping birch and willow round
10 With their long fibres swept the ground.
Here, for retreat in dangerous hour,
Some chief had framed a rustic bower.

XXVI

- It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device;
Of such materials, as around
The workman's hand had readiest found.
5 Lopp'd of their boughs, their hoar trunks bared,
And by the hatchet rudely squared,
To give the walls their destined height,
The sturdy oak and ash unite;
While moss and clay and leaves combined
10 To fence each crevice from the wind.
The lighter pine-trees overhead,
Their slender length for rafters spread,
And wither'd heath and rushes dry
Supplied a russet canopy.

- 15 Due westward, fronting to the green,
A rural portico was seen,
Aloft on native pillars borne,
Of mountain fir with bark unshorn,
Where Ellen's hand had taught to twine
20 The ivy and Idæan vine,
The clematis, the favour'd flower
Which boasts the name of virgin-bower
And every hardy plant could bear
Loch Katrine's keen and searching air
25 An instant in this porch she staid,
And gaily to the stranger said,
"On heaven and on thy lady call,
And enter the enchanted hall!"

XXVII

- "My hope, my heaven, my trust must be,
My gentle guide, in following thee."—
He cross'd the threshold—and a clang
Of angry steel that instant rang.
5 To his bold brow his spirit rush'd,
But soon for vain alarm he blush'd,
When on the floor he saw display'd,
Cause of the din, a naked blade
Dropp'd from the sheath, that careless flung
10 Upon a stag's huge antlers swung;
For all around, the walls to grace,
Hung trophies of the fight or chase:
A target there, a bugle here,
A battle-axe, a hunting-spear,
15 And broadswords, bows, and arrows store,
With the tusk'd trophies of the boar.
Here grins the wolf as when he died,
And there the wild-cat's brindled hide
The frontlet of the elk adorns,
20 Or mantles o'er the bison's horns;
Pennons and flags defaced and stain'd,
That blackening streaks of blood retain'd,

And deer-skins, dappled, dun, and white,
 With otter's fur and seal's unite,
 25 In rude and uncouth tapestry all,
 To garnish forth the silvan hall.

XXVIII

The wondering stranger round him gazed,
 And next the fallen weapon raised:—
 Few were the arms whose sinewy strength,
 Sufficed to stretch it forth at length.
 5 And as the brand he poised and sway'd,
 "I never knew but one," he said,
 "Whose stalwart arm might brook to wield
 A blade like this in battle-field."
 She sigh'd, then smiled and took the word;
 10 "You see the guardian champion's sword:
 As light it trembles in his hand,
 As in my grasp a hazel wand;
 My sire's tall form might grace the part
 Of Ferragus, or Ascabart;
 15 But in the absent giant's hold
 Are women now, and menials old."

XXIX

The mistress of the mansion came,
 Mature of age, a graceful dame;
 Whose easy step and stately port
 Had well become a princely court,
 5 To whom, though more than kindred knew,
 Young Ellen gave a mother's due.
 Meet welcome to her guest she made,
 And every courteous rite was paid,
 That hospitality could claim,
 10 Though all unask'd his birth and name.
 Such then the reverence to a guest,
 That fellest foe might join the feast,
 And from his deadliest foeman's door
 Unquestion'd turn, the banquet o'er.

- 15 At length his rank the stranger names,
 "The Knight of Snowdown, James Fitz-James;
 Lord of a barren heritage,
 Which his brave sires, from age to age,
 By their good swords had held with toil;
 20 His sire had fallen in such turmoil,
 And he, God wot, was forced to stand
 Oft for his right with blade in hand.
 This morning, with Lord Moray's train
 He chased a stalwart stag in vain,
 25 Outstripp'd his comrades, miss'd the deer,
 Lost his good steed, and wander'd here."

XXX

- Fain would the Knight in turn require
 The name and state of Ellen's sire.
 Well show'd the elder lady's mien,
 That courts and cities she had seen;
 5 Ellen, though more her looks display'd
 The simple grace of silvan maid,
 In speech and gesture, form and face,
 Show'd she was come of gentle race.
 'Twere strange in ruder rank to find
 10 Such looks, such manners, and such mind.
 Each hint the Knight of Snowdown gave,
 Dame Margaret heard with silence grave;
 Or Ellen, innocently gay,
 Turn'd all inquiry light away:—
 15 "Weird women we! by dale and down
 We dwell, afar from tower and town.
 We stem the flood, we ride the blast,
 On wandering knights our spells we cast;
 While viewless minstrels touch the string,
 20 'Tis thus our charmed rhymes we sing."
 She sung, and still a harp unseen
 Fill'd up the symphony between.

XXXI

Song

- “Soldier, rest! thy warfare o’er,
 Sleep the sleep that knows no breaking;
 Dream of battled fields no more,
 Days of danger, nights of waking.
 5 In our isle’s enchanted hall,
 Hands unseen thy couch are strewing,
 Fairy strains of music fall,
 Every sense in slumber dewing.
 Soldier, rest! thy warfare o’er,
 10 Dream of fighting fields no more:
 Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
 Morn of toil, nor night of waking.

- “No rude sound shall reach thine ear,
 Armour’s clang, or war-steed champing,
 15 Trump nor pibroch summon here
 Mustering clan, or squadron tramping.
 Yet the lark’s shrill fife may come
 At the daybreak from the fallow,
 And the bittern sound his drum,
 20 Booming from the sedgy shallow.
 Ruder sounds shall none be near,
 Guards nor warders challenge here,
 Here’s no war-steed’s neigh and champing,
 Shouting clans or squadrons stamping.”

XXXII

- She paused—then, blushing, led the lay
 To grace the stranger of the day.
 Her mellow notes awhile prolong
 The cadence of a flowing song,
 5 Till to her lips in measured frame
 The minstrel verse spontaneous came.

Song—Continued

- “Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
 While our slumbrous spells assail ye,
 Dream not, with the rising sun,
 10 Bugles here shall sound reveillé.
 Sleep! the deer is in his den;
 Sleep! thy hounds are by thee lying;
 Sleep! nor dream in yonder glen,
 How thy gallant steed lay dying.
 15 Huntsman, rest! thy chase is done,
 Think not of the rising sun,
 For at dawning to assail ye,
 Here no bugles sound reveillé.”

XXXIII

- The hall was clear'd—the stranger's bed
 Was there of mountain heather spread,
 Where oft a hundred guests had lain,
 And dream'd their forest sports again.
 5 But vainly did the heath-flower shed
 Its moorland fragrance round his head;
 Not Ellen's spell had lull'd to rest
 The fever of his troubled breast.
 In broken dreams the image rose
 10 Of varied perils, pains, and woes:
 His steed now flounders in the brake,
 Now sinks his barge upon the lake;
 Now leader of a broken host,
 His standard falls, his honour's lost.
 15 Then,—from my couch may heavenly might
 Chase that worst phantom of the night!—
 Again return'd the scenes of youth,
 Of confident undoubting truth;
 Again his soul he interchanged
 20 With friends whose hearts were long estranged.
 They come, in dim procession led,
 The cold, the faithless, and the dead;

- As warm each hand, each brow as gay,
 As if they parted yesterday.
 25 And doubt distracts him at the view,—
 O were his senses false or true?
 Dream'd he of death, or broken vow,
 Or is it all a vision now?

XXXIV

- At length, with Ellen in a grove
 He seem'd to walk, and speak of love;
 She listened with a blush and sigh,
 His suit was warm, his hopes were high.
 5 He sought her yielded hand to clasp,
 And a cold gauntlet met his grasp:
 The phantom's sex was changed and gone,
 Upon its head a helmet shone;
 Slowly enlarged to giant size,
 10 With darken'd cheek and threatening eyes,
 The grisly visage, stern and hoar,
 To Ellen still a likeness bore.—
 He woke, and, panting with affright,
 Recall'd the vision of the night.
 15 The hearth's decaying brands were red,
 And deep and dusky lustre shed,
 Half showing, half concealing, all
 The uncouth trophies of the hall.
 Mid those the stranger fixed his eye
 20 Where that huge falchion hung on high,
 And thoughts on thoughts, a countless throng,
 Rush'd, chasing countless thoughts along,
 Until, the giddy whirl to cure,
 He rose, and sought the moonshine pure.

XXXV

The wild-rose, eglantine, and broom,
 Wasted around their rich perfume;
 The birch-trees wept in fragrant balm,
 The aspens slept beneath the calm;

- 5 The silver light, with quivering glance,
Play'd on the water's still expanse,—
Wild were the heart whose passion's sway
Could rage beneath the sober ray!
He felt its calm, that warrior guest,
10 While thus he communed with his breast:—
“Why is it, at each turn I trace
Some memory of that exiled race?
Can I not mountain-maiden spy,
But she must bear the Douglas eye?
15 Can I not view a Highland brand,
But it must match the Douglas hand?
Can I not frame a fever'd dream,
But still the Douglas is the theme?
I'll dream no more—by manly mind
20 Not even in sleep is will resign'd.
My midnight orisons said o'er,
I'll turn to rest, and dream no more.”
His midnight orisons he told,
A prayer with every bead of gold,
25 Consign'd to heaven his cares and woes,
And sunk in undisturb'd repose;
Until the heath-cock shrilly crew,
And morning dawn'd on Benvenue.

CANTO SECOND

The Island

I

At morn the black-cock trims his jetty wing,
 'Tis morning prompts the linnet's blithest lay,
 All Nature's children feel the matin spring
 Of life reviving, with reviving day;
 5 And while yon little bark glides down the bay,
 Wafting the stranger on his way again,
 Morn's genial influence roused a minstrel grey,
 And sweetly o'er the lake was heard thy strain,
 Mix'd with the sounding harp, O white-hair'd Allan
 bane!

II

Song

"Not faster yonder rowers' might
 Flings from their oars the spray,
 Not faster yonder rippling bright,
 That tracks the shallop's course in light,
 5 Melts in the lake away,
 Than men from memory erase
 The benefits of former days;
 Then, stranger, go! good speed the while,
 Nor think again of the lonely isle.

10 "High place to thee in royal court,
 High place in battle line,
 Good hawk and hound for silvan sport,
 Where beauty sees the brave resort,
 The honour'd meed be thine!

15 True be thy sword, thy friend sincere,
 Thy lady constant, kind, and dear,

- 5 The silver light, with quivering glance,
Play'd on the water's still expanse,—
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Song—Continued

And lost in love, and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle.

III

- “But if beneath yon southern sky
A plaided stranger roam,
Whose drooping crest and stifled sigh,
And sunken cheek and heavy eye,
5 Pine for his Highland home;
Then, warrior, then be thine to show
The care that soothes a wanderer's woe;
Remember then thy hap crewwhile,
A stranger in the lonely isle.
- 10 “Or if on life's uncertain main
Mishap shall mar thy sail;
If faithful, wise, and brave in vain,
Woe, want, and exile thou sustain
Beneath the fickle gale;
15 Waste not a sigh on fortune changed,
On thankless courts, or friends estranged,
But come where kindred worth shall smile,
To greet thee in the lonely isle.”

IV

- As died the sounds upon the tide,
The shallop reach'd the mainland side,
And ere his onward way he took,
The stranger cast a lingering look,
5 Where easily his eye might reach
The Harper on the islet beach,
Reclined against a blighted tree,
As wasted, grey, and worn as he.
To minstrel meditation given,
10 His reverend brow was raised to heaven,
As from the rising sun to claim
A sparkle of inspiring flame.

- His hand, reclined upon the wire,
 Seem'd watching the awakening fire;
 15 So still he sate, as those who wait
 Till judgment speak the doom of fate;
 So still, as if no breeze might dare
 To lift one lock of hoary hair;
 So still, as life itself were fled,
 20 In the last sound his harp had sped.

V

- Upon a rock with lichens wild,
 Beside him Ellen sate and smiled.—
 Smiled she to see the stately drake
 Lead forth his fleet upon the lake,
 5 While her vex'd spaniel, from the beach,
 Bay'd at the prize beyond his reach?
 Yet tell me, then, the maid who knows,
 Why deepen'd on her cheek the rose?—
 Forgive, forgive, Fidelity!
 10 Perchance the maiden smiled to see
 You parting lingerer wave adieu,
 And stop and turn to wave anew;
 And, lovely ladies, ere your ire
 Condemn the heroine of my lyre,
 15 Show me the fair would scorn to spy,
 And prize such conquest of her eye!

VI

- While yet he loiter'd on the spot,
 It seem'd as Ellen mark'd him not;
 But when he turn'd him to the glade,
 One courteous parting sign she made;
 5 And after, oft the knight would say,
 That not when prize of festal day
 Was dealt him by the brightest fair,
 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,

Song—Continued

And lost in love, and friendship's smile
Be memory of the lonely isle.

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 That not when prize of festal day
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 Who e'er wore jewel in her hair,

- So highly did his bosom swell,
 10 As at that simple mute farewell.
 Now with a trusty mountain-guide,
 And his dark stag-hounds by his side,
 He parts—the maid, unconscious still,
 Watch'd him wind slowly round the hill;
 15 But when his stately form was hid,
 The guardian in her bosom chid—
 “Thy Malcolm! vain and selfish maid!”
 ’Twas thus upbraiding conscience said,—
 “Not so had Malcolm idly hung
 20 On the smooth phrase of southern tongue;
 Not so had Malcolm strain’d his eye
 Another step than thine to spy.—
 Wake, Allan-bane,” aloud she cried,
 To the old Minstrel by her side,—
 25 “Arouse thee from thy moody dream!
 I’ll give thy harp heroic theme,
 And warm thee with a noble name;
 Pour forth the glory of the Græme!”
 Scarce from her lip the word had rush’d,
 30 When deep the conscious maiden blush’d;
 For of his clan, in hall and bower,
 Young Malcolm Græme was held the flower.

VII

- The Minstrel waked his harp—three times
 Arose the well-known martial chimes,
 And thrice their high heroic pride
 In melancholy murmurs died.
 5 “Vainly thou bid’st, O noble maid,”
 Clasp’ing his wither’d hands, he said,
 “Vainly thou bid’st me wake the strain,
 Though all unwont to bid in vain.
 Alas! than mine a mightier hand
 10 Has tuned my harp, my strings has spann’d!
 I touch the chords of joy, but low
 And mournful answer notes of woe;

- And the proud march, which victors tread,
 Sinks in the wailing for the dead.
 15 O well for me, if mine alone
 That dirge's deep prophetic tone!
 If, as my tuneful fathers said,
 This harp, which erst Saint Modan sway'd,
 Can thus its master's fate foretell,
 20 Then welcome be the minstrel's knell!

VIII

- “But ah! dear lady, thus it sigh'd
 The eve thy sainted mother died;
 And such the sounds which, while I strove
 To wake a lay of war or love,
 5 Came marring all the festal mirth,
 Appalling me who gave them birth,
 And, disobedient to my call,
 Wail'd loud through Bothwell's banner'd hall,
 Ere Douglasses, to ruin driven,
 10 Were exiled from their native heaven.—
 Oh! if yet worse mishap and woe,
 My master's house must undergo,
 Or aught but weal to Ellen fair,
 Brood in these accents of despair,
 15 No future bard, sad Harp! shall fling
 Triumph or rapture from thy string;
 One short, one final strain shall flow,
 Fraught with unutterable woe,
 Then shiver'd shall thy fragments lie,
 20 Thy master cast him down and die!”

IX

Soothing she answer'd him:—“Assuage,
 Mine honour'd friend, the fears of age;
 All melodies to thee are known,
 That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,

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IX

Soothing she answer'd him:—"Assuage,
Mine honour'd friend, the fears of age;
All melodies to thee are known,
'That harp has rung, or pipe has blown,

- 5 In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
 From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
 At times, unbidden notes should rise,
 Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
 Entangling, as they rush along,
 10 The war-march with the funeral song?—
 Small ground is now for boding fear;
 Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
 My sire, in native virtue great,
 Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
 15 Not then to fortune more resign'd,
 Than yonder oak might give the wind;
 The graceful foliage storms may reave,
 The noble stem they cannot grieve.
 For me,"—she stoop'd, and, looking round,
 20 Pluck'd a blue hare-bell from the ground,—
 "For me, whose memory scarce conveys
 An image of more splendid days,
 This little flower, that loves the lea,
 May well my simple emblem be;
 25 It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
 That in the king's own garden grows;
 And when I place it in my hair,
 Allan, a bard, is bound to swear
 He ne'er saw coronet so fair."
 30 Then playfully the chaplet wild
 She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

X

- Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
 Wiled the old harper's mood away.
 With such a look as hermits throw,
 When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
 5 He gazed, till fond regret and pride
 Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied:
 "Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
 The rank, the honours, thou hast lost!

- O might I live to see thee grace,
 10 In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
 To see my favourite's step advance,
 The lightest in the courtly dance,
 The cause of every gallant's sigh,
 And leading star of every eve,
 15 And theme of every minstrel's art,
 The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!"

XI

- "Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
 Light was her accent, yet she sigh'd;
 "Yet is this mossy rock to me
 Worth splendid chair and canopy;
 5 Nor would my footstep spring more gay
 In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
 Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
 To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
 And then for suitors proud and high,
 10 To bend before my conquering eye,—
 Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
 That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
 The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
 The terror of Loch-Lomond's side,
 15 Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay
 A Lennox foray—for a day."—

XII

- The ancient bard his glee repress'd:
 "Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled!
 5 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
 Courtiers give place before the stride
 Of the undaunted homicide;

- 5 In Lowland vale or Highland glen,
From Tweed to Spey—what marvel, then,
At times, unbidden notes should rise,
Confusedly bound in memory's ties,
Entangling, as they rush along,
10 The war-march with the funeral song?—
Small ground is now for boding fear;
Obscure, but safe, we rest us here.
My sire, in native virtue great,
Resigning lordship, lands, and state,
15 Not then to fortune more resign'd,
Than yonder oak might give the wind;
The graceful foliage storms may reave,
The noble stem they cannot grieve.
For me,"—she stoop'd, and, looking round,
20 Pluck'd a blue hare-bell from the ground,—
"For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower, that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be;
25 It drinks heaven's dew as blithe as rose
That in the king's own garden grows;
And when I place it in my hair,
Allan, a bard, is bound to swear
He ne'er saw coronet so fair."
30 Then playfully the chaplet wild
She wreath'd in her dark locks, and smiled.

X

- Her smile, her speech, with winning sway,
Wiled the old harper's mood away.
With such a look as hermits throw,
When angels stoop to soothe their woe,
5 He gazed, till fond regret and pride
Thrilled to a tear, then thus replied:
"Loveliest and best! thou little know'st
The rank, the honours, thou hast lost!

- O might I live to see thee grace,
 10 In Scotland's court, thy birth-right place,
 To see my favourite's step advance,
 The lightest in the courtly dance,
 The cause of every gallant's sigh,
 And leading star of every eve,
 15 And theme of every minstrel's art,
 The Lady of the Bleeding Heart!"

XI

- "Fair dreams are these," the maiden cried,
 Light was her accent, yet she sigh'd;
 "Yet is this mossy rock to me
 Worth splendid chair and canopy;
 5 Nor would my footstep spring more gay
 In courtly dance than blithe strathspey,
 Nor half so pleased mine ear incline
 To royal minstrel's lay as thine.
 And then for suitors proud and high,
 10 To bend before my conquering eye,—
 Thou, flattering bard! thyself wilt say,
 That grim Sir Roderick owns its sway.
 The Saxon scourge, Clan-Alpine's pride,
 The terror of Loch-Lomond's side,
 15 Would, at my suit, thou know'st, delay
 A Lennox foray—for a day."—

XII

- The ancient bard his glee repress'd:
 "Ill hast thou chosen theme for jest!
 For who, through all this western wild,
 Named Black Sir Roderick e'er, and smiled!
 5 In Holy-Rood a knight he slew;
 I saw, when back the dirk he drew,
 Courtiers give place before the stride
 Of the undaunted homicide;

- And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand
 10 Full sternly kept his mountain land.
 Who else dared give—ah! woe the day,
 That I such hated truth should say—
 The Douglas, like a stricken deer,
 Disown'd by every noble peer,
 15 Even the rude refuge we have here?
 Alas, this wild marauding Chief
 Alone might hazard our relief,
 And now thy maiden charms expand,
 Looks for his guerdon in thy hand;
 20 Full soon may dispensation sought,
 To back his suit, from Rome be brought.
 Then, though an exile on the hill,
 Thy father, as the Douglas, still
 Be held in reverence and fear;
 25 And though to Roderick thou'rt so dear,
 That thou might'st guide with silken thread,
 Slave of thy will, this chieftain dread;
 Yet, O loved maid, thy mirth refrain!
 Thy hand is on a lion's mane.”—

XIII

- “Minstrel,” the maid replied, and high
 Her father's soul glanced from her eye,
 “My debts to Roderick's house I know:
 All that a mother could bestow,
 5 To Lady Margaret's care I owe,
 Since first an orphan in the wild
 She sorrow'd o'er her sister's child;
 To her brave chieftain son, from ire
 Of Scotland's king who shrouds my sire,
 10 A deeper, holier debt is owed;
 And, could I pay it with my blood,
 Allan! Sir Roderick should command
 My blood, my life,—but not my hand.
 Rather will Ellen Douglas dwell
 15 A votaress in Maronnan's cell;

- Rather through realms beyond the sea,
 Seeking the world's cold charity,
 Where ne'er was spoke a Scottish word,
 And ne'er the name of Douglas heard,
 20 An outcast pilgrim will she rove,
 Than wed the man she cannot love.

XIV

- "Thou shakest, good friend, thy tresses grey—
 That pleading look, what can it say
 But what I own?—I grant him brave,
 But wild as Bracklinn's thundering wave;
 5 And generous—save vindictive mood,
 Or jealous transport, chafe his blood:
 I grant him true to friendly band,
 As his claymore is to his hand;
 But O! that very blade of steel
 10 More mercy for a foe would feel:
 I grant him liberal, to fling
 Among his clan the wealth they bring,
 When back by lake and glen they wind,
 And in the Lowland leave behind,
 15 Where once some pleasant hamlet stood,
 A mass of ashes slaked with blood.
 The hand that for my father fought,
 I honour, as his daughter ought;
 But can I clasp it reeking red,
 20 From peasants slaughter'd in their shed?
 No! wildly while his virtues gleam,
 They make his passions darker seem,
 And flash along his spirit high,
 Like lightning o'er the midnight sky
 25 While yet a child,—and children know,
 Instinctive taught, the friend and foe,—
 I shudder'd at his brow of gloom,
 His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
 A maiden grown, I ill could bear
 30 His haughty mien and lordly air:

- And since, though outlaw'd, hath his hand
10 Full sternly kept his mountain land.
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 His shadowy plaid, and sable plume;
 A maiden grown, I ill could bear
 30 His haughty mien and lordly air:

But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
 In serious mood, to Roderick's name,
 I thrill with anguish! or, if e'er
 A Douglas knew the word, with fear.
 35 To change such odious theme were best,—
 What think'st thou of our stranger guest?"—

XV

"What think I of him?—woe the while
 That brought such wanderer to our isle!
 Thy father's battle-brand, of yore
 For Tine-man forged by fairy lore,
 5 What time he leagued, no longer foes,
 His Border spears with Hotspur's bows,
 Did, self-unscabbarded, foreshow
 The footstep of a secret foe.
 If courtly spy hath harbour'd here,
 10 What may we for the Douglas fear?
 What for this island, deem'd of old
 Clan-Alpine's last and surest hold?
 If neither spy nor foe, I pray
 What yet may jealous Roderick say?
 15 —Nay, wave not thy disdainful head,
 Bethink thee of the discord dread,
 That kindled when at Beltane game
 Thou ledst the dance with Malcolm Grame;
 Still, though thy sire the peace renew'd,
 20 Smoulders in Roderick's breast the feud;
 Beware!—But hark, what sounds are these?
 My dull ears catch no faltering breeze,
 No weeping birch nor aspens wake,
 Nor breath is dimpling in the lake,
 25 Still is the canna's hoary beard,
 Yet, by my minstrel faith, I heard—
 And hark again! some pipe of war
 Sends the bold pibroch from afar."

XVI

- Far up the lengthen'd lake were spied
Four darkening specks upon the tide,
That, slow enlarging on the view,
Four mann'd and masted barges grew,
5 And, bearing downwards from Glengyle,
Steer'd full upon the lonely isle;
The point of Brianchoil they pass'd,
And, to the windward as they cast,
Against the sun they gave to shine
10 The bold Sir Roderick's banner'd Pine.
Nearer and nearer as they bear,
Spears, pikes, and axes flash in air.
Now might you see the tartans brave,
And plaids and plumage dance and wave:
15 Now see the bonnets sink and rise,
As his tough oar the rower plies;
See, flashing at each sturdy stroke,
The wave ascending into smoke;
See the proud pipers on the bow,
20 And mark the gaudy streamers flow
From their loud chanter's down, and sweep
The furrow'd bosom of the deep,
As, rushing through the lake amain,
They plied the ancient Highland strain.

XVII

- Ever, as on they bore, more loud
And louder rung the pibroch proud.
At first the sound, by distance tame,
Mellow'd along the waters came,
5 And, lingering long by cape and bay,
Wail'd every harsher note away,
Then bursting bolder on the ear,
The clan's shrill Gathering they could hear;
Those thrilling sounds, that call the might
10 Of Old Clan-Alpine to the fight.

- But, if thou join'st a suitor's claim,
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- Thick beat the rapid notes, as when
The mustering hundreds shake the glen,
And hurry at the signal dread,
The batter'd earth returns their tread.
15 Then prelude light, of livelier tone,
Express'd their merry marching on,
Ere peal of closing battle rose,
With mingled outcry, shrieks, and blows;
And mimic din of stroke and ward,
20 As broad sword upon target jarr'd ;
And groaning pause, ere yet again,
Condensed, the battle yell'd amain;
The rapid charge, the rallying shout,
Retreat borne headlong into rout,
25 And bursts of triumph, to declare
Clan-Alpine's conquest—all were there.
Nor ended thus the strain; but slow
Sunk in a moan prolong'd and low,
And changed the conquering clarion swell,
30 For wild lament o'er those that fell.

XVIII

- The war-pipes ceased; but lake and hill
Were busy with their echoes still;
And, when they slept, a vocal strain
Bade their hoarse chorus wake again,
5 While loud a hundred clansmen raise
Their voices in their Chieftain's praise.
Each boatman, bending to his oar,
With measured sweep the burden bore,
In such wild cadence as the breeze
10 Makes through December's leafless trees.
The chorus first could Allan know,
"Roderick Vich Alpine, ho! iro!"
And near, and nearer as they row'd,
Distinct the martial ditty flow'd.

XIX

Boat Song

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
 Honour'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine!
 Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
 Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!

5 Heaven send it happy dew,
 Earth lend it sap anew,
 Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
 While every Highland glen
 Sends our shout back agen,
 10 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroc!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
 Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
 When the whirlwind has stripp'd every leaf on the
 mountain,

The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
 15 Moor'd in the rifted rock,
 Proof to the tempest's shock,
 Firmer he roots him the ruder it blow;
 Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
 Echo his praise agen,
 20 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroc!"

XX

Proudly our pibroch has thrill'd in Glen Fruin,
 And Bannochar's groans to our slogan replied;
 Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
 And the best of Loch-Lomond lie dead on her side.

5 Widow and Saxon maid
 Long shall lament our raid,
 Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe;
 Lennox and Leven-glen
 Shake when they hear agen
 10 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroc!"

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 "Roderick Vich Alpine, ho ! iro !"
 And near, and nearer as they row'd,
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XIX

Quat Song

- Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
 Honour'd and bless'd be the ever-green Pine!
 Long may the tree, in his banner that glances,
 Flourish, the shelter and grace of our line!
- 5 Heaven send it happy dew,
 Earth lend it sap anew,
 Gayly to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
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- 10 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

- Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands!
Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine!
O, that the rose-bud that graces yon islands,
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine!
15 O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honour'd and blessed in their shadow might grow!
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
20 "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

XXI

- With all her joyful female band,
Had Lady Margaret sought the strand.
Loose on the breeze their tresses flew,
And high their snowy arms they threw,
5 As eehoing back with shrill acclaim,
And chorus wild, the Chieftain's name;
While, prompt to please, with mother's art,
The darling passion of his heart,
The Dame called Ellen to the strand,
10 To greet her kinsman ere he land:
"Come, loiterer, come! a Douglas thou,
And shun to wreathe a victor's brow?"
Reluctantly and slow, the maid
The unwelcome summoning obey'd,
15 And, when a distant bugle rung,
In the mid-path aside she sprung:—
"List, Allan-bane! From mainland east
I hear my father's signal blast.
Be ours," she cried, "the skiff to guide,
20 And waft him from the mountain side."
Then, like a sunbeam, swift and bright,
She darted to her shallop light,
And, eagerly while Roderick scann'd,
For her dear form, his mother's band,

- 25 The islet far behind her lay,
And she had landed in the bay.

XXII

- Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven;
And if there be a human tear
From passion's dross refined and clear,
5 A tear so limpid and so meek,
It would not stain an angel's cheek,
'T is that which pious fathers shed
Upon a duteous daughter's head!
And as the Douglas to his breast
10 His darling Ellen closely press'd,
Such holy drops her tresses steep'd,
Though 't was an hero's eye that weep'd.
Nor while on Ellen's faltering tongue
Her filial welcomes crowded hung,
15 Mark'd she, that fear (affection's proof)
Still held a graceful youth aloof;
No! not till Douglas named his name,
Although the youth was Malcolm Græme.

XXIII

- Allan, with wistful look the while,
Mark'd Roderick landing on the isle;
His master piteously he eyed,
Then gazed upon the Chieftain's pride,
5 Then dash'd, with hasty hand, away
From his dimm'd eye the gathering spray;
And Douglas, as his hand he laid
On Malcolm's shoulder, kindly said,
"Canst thou, young friend, no meaning spy
10 In my poor follower's glistening eye?
I'll tell thee:—he recalls the day,
When in my praise he led the lay

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- O'er the arch'd gate of Bothwell proud,
 While many a minstrel answer'd loud,
 15 When Percy's Norman pennon, won
 In bloody field, before me shone,
 And twice ten knights, the least a name
 As mighty as yon Chief may claim,
 Gracing my pomp, behind me came.
 20 Yet trust me, Malcolm, not so proud
 Was I of all that marshall'd crowd,
 Though the waned crescent own'd my might,
 And in my train troop'd lord and knight,
 Though Blantyre hymn'd her holiest lays,
 25 And Bothwell's bards flung back my praise,
 As when this old man's silent tear,
 And this poor maid's affection dear,
 A welcome give more kind and true
 Than aught my better fortunes knew.
 30 Forgive, my friend, a father's boast,
 O! it out-beggars all I lost!"

XXIV

- Delightful praise!—like summer rose,
 That brighter in the dew-drop glows,
 The bashful maiden's cheek appear'd,
 For Douglas spoke, and Malcolm heard.
 5 The flush of shame-faced joy to hide,
 The hounds, the hawk, her cares divide;
 The loved caresses of the maid
 The dogs with crouch and whimper paid;
 And, at her whistle, on her hand
 10 The falcon took her favourite stand,
 Closed his dark wing, relax'd his eye,
 Nor, though unhooded, sought to fly.
 And, trust, while in such guise she stood,
 Like fabled Goddess of the wood,
 15 That if a father's partial thought
 O'erweigh'd her worth, and beauty aught,

Well might the lover's judgment fail
 To balance with a juster scale;
 For with each secret glance he stole,
 20 The fond enthusiast sent his soul.

XXV

Of stature tall, and slender frame,
 But firmly knit, was Malcolm Græme.
 The belted plaid and tartan hose
 Did ne'er more graceful limbs disclose;
 5 His flaxen hair, of sunny hue,
 Curl'd closely round his bonnet blue.
 Train'd to the chase, his eagle eye
 The ptarmigan in snow could spy;
 Each pass, by mountain, lake, and heath,
 10 He knew, through Lennox and Menteith;
 Vain was the bound of dark-brown doe,
 When Malcolm bent his sounding bow,
 And scarce that doe, though wing'd with fear,
 Outstripp'd in speed the mountaineer:
 15 Right up Ben-Lomond could he press,
 And not a sob his toil confess.
 His form accorded with a mind
 Lively and ardent, frank and kind;
 A blither heart, till Ellen came,
 20 Did never love nor sorrow tame;
 It danced as lightsome in his breast,
 As play'd the feather on his crest.
 Yet friends, who nearest knew the youth,
 His scorn of wrong, his zeal for truth,
 25 And bards, who saw his features bold,
 When kindled by the tales of old,
 Said, were that youth to manhood grown,
 Not long should Roderick Dhu's renown
 Be foremost voiced by mountain fame,
 30 But quail to that of Malcolm Græme.

XXVI

- Now back they wend their watery way,
And, "O my sire!" did Ellen say,
"Why urge thy chase so far astray?
And why so late return'd? And why"—
5 The rest was in her speaking eye.
"My child, the chase I follow far,
"T is mimicry of noble war;
And with that gallant pastime reft
Were all of Douglas I have left.
10 I met young Malcolm as I stray'd
Far eastward, in Glenfinlas' shade,
Nor stray'd I safe; for, all around,
Hunters and horsemen scour'd the ground.
This youth, though still a royal ward,
15 Risk'd life and land to be my guard,
And through the passes of the wood
Guided my steps, not unpursued;
And Roderick shall his welcome make,
Despite old spleen, for Douglas' sake.
20 Then must he seek Strath-Endrick glen,
Nor peril aught for me agen."

XXVII

- Sir Roderick, who to meet them came,
Redden'd at sight of Malcolm Græme,
Yet, not in action, word, or eye,
Fail'd aught in hospitality.
5 'In talk and sport they whiled away
The morning of that summer day;
But at high noon a courier light
Held secret parley with the knight,
Whose moody aspect soon declared
10 That evil were the news he heard.
Deep thought seem'd toiling in his head;
Yet was the evening banquet made,
Ere he assembled round the flame,
His mother, Douglas, and the Græme,

- 15 And Ellen, too; then cast around
 His eyes, then fix'd them on the ground,
 As studying phrase that might avail
 Best to convey unpleasant tale.
 Long with his dagger's hilt he play'd,
 20 Then raised his haughty brow, and said:—

XXVIII

- “Short be my speech;—nor time affords,
 Nor my plain temper, glozing words.
 Kinsman and father,—if such name
 Douglas vouchsafe to Roderick's claim;
 5 Mine honour'd mother:—Ellen,—why,
 My cousin, turn away thine eye?—
 And Græme, in whom I hope to know
 Full soon a noble friend or foe,
 When age shall give thee thy command,
 10 And leading in thy native land,—
 List all!—The King's vindictive pride
 Boasts to have tamed the Border-side,
 Where chiefs, with bound and hawk who came
 To share their monarch's silvan game,
 15 Themselves in bloody toils were snared,
 And when the banquet they prepared,
 And wide their loyal portals flung,
 O'er their own gateway struggling hung.
 Loud cries their blood from Meggat's mead,
 20 From Yarrow braes, and banks of Tweed,
 Where the lone streams of Ettrick glide,
 And from the silver Teviot's side;
 The dales, where martial clans did ride,
 Are now one sheep-walk, waste and wide.
 25 This tyrant of the Scottish throne,
 So faithless, and so ruthless known,
 Now hither comes; his end the same,
 The same pretext of silvan game.
 What grace for Highland Chiefs, judge ye
 30 By fate of Border chivalry.

Yet more; amid Glenfinlas' green,
 Douglas, thy stately form was seen.
 This by espial sure I know:
 Your counsel in the streight I show."

XXIX

- Ellen and Margaret fearfully
 Sought comfort in each other's eye,
 Then turn'd their ghastly look, each one,
 This to her sire, that to her son.
- 5 The hasty colour went and came
 In the bold cheek of Malcolm Græme;
 But from his glance it well appear'd,
 'T was but for Ellen that he fear'd;
 While, sorrowful, but undismay'd,
- 10 The Douglas thus his counsel said:—
 "Brave Roderick, though the tempest roar,
 It may but thunder and pass o'er;
 Nor will I here remain an hour,
 To draw the lightning on thy bower;
- 15 For well thou know'st, at this grey head
 The royal bolt were fiercest sped.
 For thee, who, at thy King's command,
 Canst aid him with a gallant band,
 Submission, homage, humbled pride,
- 20 Shall turn the Monarch's wrath aside,
 Poor remnants of the Bleeding Heart,
 Ellen and I will seek, apart,
 The refuge of some forest cell,
 There, like the hunted quarry, dwell,
- 25 Till on the mountain and the moor,
 The stern pursuit be pass'd and o'er."—

XXX

"No, by mine honour," Roderick said,
 "So help me Heaven, and my good blade!
 No, never! Blasted be yon Pine,
 My fathers' ancient crest and mine,

- 5 If from its shade in danger part
 The lineage of the Bleeding Heart!
 Hear my blunt speech: Grant me this maid
 To wife, thy counsel to mine aid;
 To Douglas, leagued with Roderick Dhu,
 10 Will friends and allies flock enow;
 Like cause of doubt, distrust, and grief,
 Will bind to us each Western Chief.
 When the loud pipes my bridal tell,
 The Links of Forth shall hear the knell,
 15 The guards shall start in Stirling's porch;
 And, when I light the nuptial torch,
 A thousand villages in flames
 Shall scare the slumbers of King James!
 —Nay, Ellen, blench not thus away,
 20 And, mother, cease these signs, I pray;
 I meant not all my heart might say.—
 Small need of inroad, or of fight,
 When the sage Douglas may unite
 Each mountain clan in friendly band,
 25 To guard the passes of their land,
 Till the foil'd king, from pathless glen,
 Shall bootless turn him home agen."

XXXI

- There are who have, at midnight hour,
 In slumber scaled a dizzy tower,
 And, on the verge that beetled o'er
 The ocean tide's incessant roar,
 5 Dream'd calmly out their dangerous dream,
 Till waken'd by the morning beam;
 When, dazzled by the eastern glow,
 Such startler cast his glance below,
 And saw unmeasured depth around,
 10 And heard unintermitted sound,
 And thought the battled fence so frail,
 It waved like cobweb in the gale;—

Amid his senses' giddy wheel,
 Did he not desperate impulse feel,
 15 Headlong to plunge himself below,
 And meet the worst his fears foreshow?—
 Thus, Ellen, dizzy and astound,
 As sudden ruin yawn'd around,
 By crossing terrors wildly toss'd,
 20 Still for the Douglas fearing most,
 Could scarce the desperate thought withstand,
 To buy his safety with her hand.

XXXII

Such purpose dread could Malcolm spy
 In Ellen's quivering lip and eye,
 And eager rose to speak—but ere
 His tongue could hurry forth his fear,
 5 Had Douglas mark'd the hectic strife,
 Where death seem'd combating with life;
 For to her cheek, in feverish flood,
 One instant rush'd the throbbing blood,
 Then ebbing back, with sudden sway,
 10 Left its domain as wan as clay.
 "Roderick, enough! enough!" he cried,
 "My daughter cannot be thy bride;
 Not that the blush to wooer dear,
 Nor paleness that of maiden fear.
 15 It may not be—forgive her, Chief,
 Nor hazard aught for our relief.
 Against his sovereign, Douglas ne'er
 Will level a rebellious spear.
 'T was I that taught his youthful hand
 20 To rein a steed and wield a brand;
 I see him yet, the princely boy!
 Not Ellen more my pride and joy;
 I love him still, despite my wrongs,
 By hasty wrath, and slanderous tongues.
 25 O seek the grace you well may find,
 Without a cause to mine combined."

XXXIII

- Twice through the hall the Chieftain strode;
 The waving of his tartans broad,
 And darken'd brow, where wounded pride
 With ire and disappointment vied,
 5 Seem'd, by the torch's gloomy light,
 Like the ill Demon of the night,
 Stooping his pinions' shadowy sway
 Upon the knighted pilgrim's way:
 But, unrequited Love! thy dart
 10 Plunged deepest its envenom'd smart,
 And Roderick, with thine anguish stung,
 At length the hand of Douglas wrung,
 While eyes, that mock'd at tears before,
 With bitter drops were running o'er.
 15 The death-pangs of long-cherish'd hope
 Scarce in that ample breast had scope,
 But, struggling with his spirit proud,
 Convulsive heaved its chequer'd shroud,
 While every sob—so mute were all—
 20 Was heard distinctly through the hall.
 The son's despair, the mother's look,
 Ill might the gentle Ellen brook;
 She rose, and to her side there came,
 To aid her parting steps, the Græme.

XXXIV

- Then Roderick from the Douglas broke—
 As flashes flame through sable smoke,
 Kindling its wreaths, long, dark, and low,
 To one broad blaze of ruddy glow,
 5 So the deep anguish of despair
 Burst, in fierce jealousy, to air.
 With stalwart grasp his hand he laid
 On Malcolm's breast and belted plaid:
 "Back, beardless boy!" he sternly said,

- 10 "Back, minion! hold'st thou thus at naught
 The lesson I so lately taught?
 This roof, the Douglas, and that maid,
 Thank thou for punishment delay'd."
 Eager as greyhound on his game,
 15 Fiercely with Roderick grappled Græme.
 "Perish my name, if aught afford
 Its Chieftain's safety save his sword!"
 Thus as they strove, their desperate hand
 Griped to the dagger or the brand,
 20 And death had been—but Douglas rose,
 And thrust between the struggling foes
 His giant strength:—"Chieftains, forego!
 I hold the first who strikes, my foe.—
 Madmen, forbear your frantic jar!"
 25 What! is the Douglas fall'n so far,
 His daughter's hand is doom'd the spoil
 Of such dishonourable broil!"
 Sullen and slowly they unclasp,
 As struck with shame, their desperate grasp,
 30 And each upon his rival glared,
 With foot advanced, and blade half bared.

XXXV

- Ere yet the brands aloft were flung
 Margaret on Roderick's mantle hung,
 And Malcolm heard his Ellen's scream,
 As falter'd through terrific dream.
 5 Then Roderick plunged in sheath his sword
 And veil'd his wrath in scornful word:
 "Rest safe till morning; pity 't were
 Such cheek should feel the midnight air!
 Then mayest thou to James Stuart tell,
 10 Roderick will keep the lake and fell,
 Nor lackey, with his freeborn clan,
 The pageant pomp of earthy man.
 More would he of Clan-Alpine know,
 Thou canst our strength and passes show.—

- 15 Malise, what ho!"—his henchman came:
 "Give our safe-conduct to the Græme."
 Young Malcolm answer'd, calm and bold,
 "Fear nothing for thy favourite hold;
 The spot, an angel deigned to grace,
 20 Is bless'd, though robbers haunt the place.
 Thy churlish courtesy for those
 Reserve, who fear to be thy foes.
 As safe to me the mountain way
 At midnight as in blaze of day,
 25 Though with his boldest at his back
 Even Roderick Dhu beset the track.—
 Brave Douglas,—lovely Ellen,—nay,
 Nought here of parting will I say.
 Earth does not hold a lonesome glen,
 30 So secret, but we meet agen.—
 Chieftain! we too shall find an hour,"—
 He said, and left the silvan bower.

XXXVI

- Old Allan follow'd to the strand,
 (Such was the Douglas's command),
 And anxious told, how, on the morn,
 The stern Sir Roderick deep had sworn,
 5 The Fiery Cross should circle o'er
 Dale, glen, and valley, down, and moor.
 Much were the peril to the Græme,
 From those who to the signal came;
 Far up the lake 't were safest land,
 10 Himself would row him to the strand.
 He gave his counsel to the wind,
 While Malcolm did, unheeding, bind,
 Round dirk and pouch and broadsword roll'd,
 His ample plaid in tighten'd fold,
 15 And stripp'd his limbs to such array
 As best might suit the watery way,—

XXXVII

- Then spoke abrupt: "Farewell to thee,
Pattern of old fidelity!"
The Minstrel's hand he kindly press'd,—
"O! could I point a place of rest!
5 My sovereign holds in ward my land,
My uncle leads my vassal band;
'To tame his foes, his friends to aid,
Poor Malcolm has but heart and blade.
Yet, if there be one faithful Græme,
10 Who loves the chieftain of his name,
Not long shall honour'd Douglas dwell,
Like hunted stag in mountain cell;
Nor, ere you pride-swoll'n robber dare,—
I may not give the rest to air!
15 Tell Roderick Dhu, I owed him nought,
Not the poor service of a boat,
To waft me to yon mountain-side."
Then plunged he in the flashing tide.
Bold o'er the flood his head he bore,
20 And stoutly steer'd him from the shore;
And Allan strain'd his anxious eye,
Far 'mid the lake his form to spy.
Darkening across each puny wave,
To which the moon her silver gave,
25 Fast as the cormorant could skim,
The swimmer plied each active limb.
Then landing in the moonlight dell,
Loud shouted of his weal to tell.
The Minstrel heard the far halloo,
30 And joyful from the shore withdrew.

CANTO THIRD

The Gathering

I

TIME rolls his ceaseless course. The race of yore,
 Who danced our infancy upon their kneec,
 And told our marvelling boyhood legends store,
 Of their strange ventures happ'd by land or sea,
 5 How are they blotted from the things that be!
 How few, all weak and wither'd of their force,
 Wait on the verge of dark eternity,
 Like stranded wrecks, the tide returning hoarse,
 To sweep them from our sight! Time rolls his cease-
 less course.

10 Yet live there still who can remember well,
 How, when a mountain chief his bugle blew,
 Both field and forest, dingle, cliff, and dell,
 And solitary heath, the signal knew;
 And fast the faithful clan around him drew,
 15 What time the warning note was keenly wound,
 What time aloft their kindred banner flew,
 While clamorous war-pipes yell'd the gathering
 sound,
 And while the Fiery Cross glanced, like a meteor,
 round.

II

The Summer dawn's reflected hue
 To purple changed Loch Katrine blue;
 Mildly and soft the western breeze
 Just kiss'd the lake, just stirr'd the trees,
 5 And the pleased lake, like maiden coy,
 Trembled but dimpled not for joy;
 The mountain-shadows on her breast
 Were neither broken nor at rest;

In bright uncertainty they lie,
 10 Like future joys to Fancy's eye.
 The water-lily to the light
 Her chalice rear'd of silver bright;
 The doe awoke, and to the lawn,
 Begemm'd with dew-drops, led her fawn;
 15 The grey mist left the mountain side,
 The torrent show'd its glistening pride;
 Invisible in flecked sky,
 The lark sent down her revelry;
 The blackbird and the speckled thrush
 20 Good-morrow gave from brake and bush;
 In answer coo'd the cushat dove
 Her notes of peace, and rest, and love.

III

No thought of peace, no thought of rest,
 Assuaged the storm in Roderick's breast.
 With sheathed broadsword in his hand,
 Abrupt he paced the islet strand,
 5 And eyed the rising sun, and laid
 His hand on his impatient blade.
 Beneath a rock, his vassals' care
 Was prompt the ritual to prepare,
 With deep and deathful meaning fraught;
 10 For such Antiquity had taught
 Was preface meet, ere yet abroad
 The Cross of Fire should take its road.
 The shrinking band stood oft aghast
 At the impatient glance he cast;—
 15 Such glance the mountain eagle threw,
 As, from the cliffs of Benvenue,
 She spread her dark sails on the wind,
 And, high in middle heaven reclined,
 With her broad shadow on the lake,
 20 Silenced the warblers of the brake.

IV

- A heap of wither'd boughs was piled,
 Of juniper and rowan wild,
 Mingled with shivers from the oak,
 Rent by the lightning's recent stroke.
 5 Brian the Hermit by it stood,
 Barefooted, in his frock and hood.
 His grisled beard and matted hair
 Obscured a visage of despair;
 His naked arms and legs, seam'd o'er,
 10 The scars of frantic penance bore.
 'That monk, of savage form and face,
 'The impending danger of his race
 Had drawn from deepest solitude,
 Far in Benharrow's bosom rude.
 15 Not his the mien of Christian priest,
 But Druid's, from the grave released,
 Whose harden'd heart and eye might brook
 On human sacrifice to look;
 And much, 't was said, of heathen lore
 20 Mix'd in the charms he mutter'd o'er.
 The hallow'd creed gave only worse
 And deadlier emphasis of curse.
 No peasant sought that Hermit's prayer,
 His cave the pilgrim shunn'd with care;
 25 The eager huntsman knew his bound,
 And in mid chase call'd off his hound;
 Or if, in lonely glen or strath,
 The desert-dweller met his path,
 He pray'd, and sign'd the cross between,
 30 While terror took devotion's mien.

V

Of Brian's birth strange tales were told.
 His mother watch'd a midnight fold,
 Built deep within a dreary glen,
 Where scatter'd lay the bones of men,

- 5 In some forgotten battle slain,
And bleach'd by drifting wind and rain.
It might have tamed a warrior's heart,
To view such mockery of his art!
The knot-grass fetter'd there the hand
10 Which once could burst an iron band;
Beneath the broad and ample bone,
That buckler'd heart to fear unknown,
A feeble and a timorous guest,
The fieldfare framed her lowly nest;
15 There the slow blind-worm left his slime
On the fleet limbs that mock'd at time;
And there, too, lay the leader's skull,
Still wreathed with chaplet, flush'd and full,
For heath-bell with her purple bloom,
20 Supplied the bonnet and the plume.
All night, in this sad glen, the maid
Sate, shrouded in her mantle's shade:
She said, no shepherd sought her side,
No hunter's hand her snood untied,
25 Yet ne'er again to braid her hair
The virgin snood did Alice wear;
Gone was her maiden glee and sport,
Her maiden girdle all too short,
Nor sought she, from that fatal night,
30 Or holy church or blessed rite,
But lock'd her secret in her breast,
And died in travail, unconfess'd.

VI

- Alone, among his young compeers,
Was Brian from his infant years;
A moody and heart-broken boy,
Estranged from sympathy and joy,
5 Bearing each taunt which careless tongue
On his mysterious lineage flung.
Whole nights he spent by moonlight pale,
To wood and stream his hap to wail,

- Till, frantic, he as truth received
 10 What of his birth the crowd believed,
 And sought, in mist and meteor fire,
 To meet and know his Phantom Sire!
 In vain to soothe his wayward fate,
 The cloister oped her pitying gate;
 15 In vain, the learning of the age
 Unclasp'd the sable-letter'd page;
 Even in its treasures he could find
 Food for the fever of his mind.
 Eager he read whatever tells
 20 Of magic, cabala, and spells,
 And every dark pursuit allied
 To curious and presumptuous pride;
 Till with fired brain and nerves o'erstrung,
 And heart with mystic horrors wrung,
 25 Desperate he sought Benharrow's den,
 And hid him from the haunts of men.

VII

- The desert gave him visions wild,
 Such as might suit the spectre's child,
 Where with black cliffs the torrents toil,
 He watch'd the wheeling eddies boil,
 5 Till, from their foam, his dazzled eyes
 Beheld the River Demon rise;
 The mountain mist took form and limb
 Of noontide hag, or goblin grim;
 The midnight wind came wild and dread,
 10 Swell'd with the voices of the dead;
 Far on the future battle-heath
 His eye beheld the ranks of death:
 Thus the lone Seer, from mankind hurl'd,
 Shaped forth a disembodied world.
 15 One lingering sympathy of mind
 Still bound him to the mortal kind;
 The only parent he could claim
 Of ancient Alpine's lineage came.

Late had he heard, in prophet's dream,
20 The fatal Ben-Shie's boding scream ;
Sounds, too, had come in midnight blast,
Of charging steeds, carcering fast
Along Benharrow's shingly side,
Where mortal horseman ne'er might ride ;
25 The thunderbolt had split the pine,—
All augur'd ill to Alpine's line.
He girt his loins, and came to show
The signals of impending woe,
And now stood prompt to bless or ban,
30 As bade the Chieftain of his clan.

VIII

'T was all prepared;—and from the rock,
A goat, the patriarch of the flock,
Before the kindling pile was laid,
And pierced by Roderick's ready blade.
5 Patient the sickening victim eyed
The life-blood ebb in crimson tide,
Down his clogg'd beard and shaggy limb,
Till darkness glazed his eyeballs dim.
The grisly priest, with murmuring prayer,
10 A slender crosslet framed with care,
A cubit's length in measure due ;
The shaft and limbs were rods of yew,
Whose parents in Inch-Cailliach wave
Their shadows o'er Clan-Alpine's grave,
15 And, answering Lomond's breezes deep,
Soothe many a chieftain's endless sleep.
The Cross, thus form'd, he held on high,
With wasted hand, and haggard eye,
And strange and mingled feelings woke,
20 While his anathema he spoke.

IX

“Woe to the clansman, who shall view
This symbol of sepulchral yew,

- Forgetful that its branches grew
 Where weep the heavens their holiest dew
 5 On Alpine's dwelling low!
 Deserter of his Chieftain's trust,
 He ne'er shall mingle with their dust,
 But, from his sires and kindred thrust,
 Each clansman's execration just
 10 Shall doom him wrath and woe."
 He paused;—the word the vassals took,
 With forward step and fiery look,
 On high their naked brands they shook,
 Their clattering targets wildly strook;
 15 And first in murmur low,
 Then, like the billow in his course,
 That far to seaward finds his source,
 And flings to shore his muster'd force,
 Burst, with loud roar, their answer hoarse,
 20 "Woe to the traitor, woe!"
 Ben-an's grey scalp the accents knew,
 The joyous wolf from covert drew,
 The exulting eagle scream'd afar,—
 They knew the voice of Alpine's war.

X

- The shout was hush'd on lake and fell,
 The Monk resumed his mutter'd spell:
 Dismal and low its accents came,
 The while he scathed the Cross with flame;
 5 And the few words that reach'd the air,
 Although the holiest name was there,
 Had more of blasphemy than prayer.
 But when he shook above the crowd
 Its kindled points, he spoke aloud:—
 10 "Woe to the wretch, who fails to rear
 At this dread sign the ready spear!
 For, as the flames this symbol sear,
 His home, the refuge of his fear,
 A kindred fate shall know;

- 15 Far o'er its roof the volumed flame
 Clan-Alpine's vengeance shall proclaim,
 While maids and matrons on his name
 Shall call down wretchedness and shame,
 And infamy and woe."
- 20 Then rose the cry of females, shrill
 As goss-hawk's whistle on the hill,
 Denouncing misery and ill,
 Mingled with childhood's babbling trill
 Of curses stammer'd slow;
- 25 Answering, with imprecation dread,
 "Sunk be his home in embers red!
 And cursed be the meanest shed
 That e'er shall hide the houseless head
 We doom to want and woe!"
- 30 A sharp and shrieking echo gave,
 Coir-Uriskin, thy goblin cave!
 And the gray pass where birches wave,
 On Beala-nam-bo.

XI

- Then deeper paused the priest anëw,
 And hard his labouring breath he drew,
 While, with set teeth and clenched hand,
 And eyes that glow'd like fiery brand,
- 5 He meditated curse more dread,
 And deadlier, on the clansman's head,
 Who, summon'd to his chieftain's aid
 The signal saw and disobey'd.
 The crosslet's points of sparkling wood
- 10 He quench'd among the bubbling blood,
 And, as again the sign he rear'd,
 Hollow and hoarse his voice was heard:
 "When flits this Cross from man to man,
 Vich-Alpine's summons to his clan,
- 15 Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
 Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!

- May ravens tear the careless eyes,
 Wolves make the coward heart their prize!
 As sinks that blood-stream in the earth,
 20 So may his heart's blood drench his hearth!
 As dies in hissing gore the spark,
 Quench thou his light, Destruction dark!
 And be the grace to him denied,
 Bought by this sign to all beside!"
- 25 He ceased; no echo gave agen
 The murmur of the deep Amen.

XII

- Then Roderick, with impatient look,
 From Brian's hand the symbol took:
 "Speed, Malise, speed!" he said, and gave
 The crosslet to his henchman brave.
- 5 "The muster-place be Lanrick mead—
 Instant the time—speed, Malise, speed!"
 Like heath-bird, when the hawks pursue,
 A barge across Loch Katrine flew;
 High stood the henchman on the prow,
- 10 So rapidly the barge-men row,
 The bubbles, where they launched the boat,
 Were all unbroken and afloat,
 Dancing in foam and ripple still,
 When it had near'd the mainland hill;
- 15 And from the silver beach's side
 Still was the prow three fathom wide,
 When lightly bounded to the land
 The messenger of blood and brand.

XIII

- Speed, Malise, speed! the dun deer's hide
 On fleeter foot was never tied.
 Speed, Malise, speed! such cause of haste
 Thine active sinews never braced.
- 5 Bend 'gainst the steepy hill thy breast,
 Burst down like torrent from its crest;

- With short and springing footstep pass
The trembling bog and false morass;
Across the brook like roebuck bound,
10 And thread the brake like questing hound;
The crag is high, the scaur is deep,
Yet shrink not from the desperate leap:
Parch'd are thy burning lips and brow,
Yet by the fountain pause not now;
15 Herald of battle, fate, and fear,
Stretch onward in thy fleet career!
The wounded hind thou track'st not now,
Pursuest not maid through greenwood bough,
Nor pliest thou now thy flying pace
20 With rivals in the mountain race;
But danger, death, and warrior deed,
Are in thy course—speed, Malise, speed!

XIV

- Fast as the fatal symbol flies,
In arms the huts and hamlets rise;
From winding glen, from upland brown,
They pour'd each hardy tenant down.
5 Nor slack'd the messenger his pace;
He show'd the sign, he named the place,
And, pressing forward like the wind,
Left clamour and surprise behind.
The fisherman forsook the strand,
10 The swarthy smith took dirk and brand;
With changed cheer, the mower blithe
Left in the half-cut swathe the scythe;
The herds without a keeper stray'd,
The plough was in mid-furrow staid,
15 The falconer toss'd his hawk away,
The hunter left the stag at bay;
Prompt at the signal of alarms,
Each son of Alpine rush'd to arms;
So swept the tumult and affray
20 Along the margin of Achray.

- Alas, thou lovely lake! that e'er
 Thy banks should echo sounds of fear!
 The rocks, the bosky thickets, sleep
 So stilly on thy bosom deep,
 25 The lark's blithe carol from the cloud,
 Seems for the scene too gaily loud.

XV

- Speed, Malise, speed! the lake is past,
 Duncraggan's huts appear at last,
 And peep, like moss-grown rocks, half seen,
 Half hidden in the copse so green;
 5 There mayst thou rest, thy labour done,
 Their Lord shall speed the signal on.—
 As stoops the hawk upon his prey,
 The henchman shot him down the way.
 —What woeful accents load the gale?
 10 The funeral yell, the female wail!
 A gallant hunter's sport is o'er,
 A valiant warrior fights no more.
 Who, in the battle or the chase,
 At Roderick's side shall fill his place!—
 15 Within the hall, where torches' ray
 Supplies the excluded beams of day,
 Lies Duncan on his lowly bier,
 And o'er him streams his widow's tear.
 His stripling son stands mournful by,
 20 His youngest weeps, but knows not why;
 The village maids and matrons round
 The dismal coronach resound.

XVI

Coronach

He is gone on the mountain,
 He is lost to the forest,
 Like a summer-dried fountain,
 When our need was the sorest.

5 The font, reappearing,
 From the rain-drops shall borrow,
 But to us comes no cheering,
 To Duncan no morrow!
 The hand of the reaper
 10 Takes the ears that are hoary,
 But the voice of the weeper
 Wails manhood in glory.
 The autumn winds rushing
 Waft the leaves that are scarest,
 15 But our flower was in flushing,
 When blighting was nearest.
 Flect foot on the correi,
 Sage counsel in eumber,
 Red hand in the foray,
 20 How sound is thy slumber!
 Like the dew on the mountain,
 Like the foam on the river,
 Like the bubble on the fountain,
 Thou art gone, and for ever!

XVII

See Stumah, who, the bier beside,
 His master's corpse with wonder eyed,
 Poor Stumah! whom his least halloo
 Could send like lightning o'er the dew,
 5 Bristles his crest, and points his ears,
 As if some stranger step he hears.
 'T is not a mourner's muffled tread,
 Who comes to sorrow o'er the dead,
 But headlong haste, or deadly fear,
 10 Urge the precipitate career.
 All stand aghast:—unheeding all,
 The henchman bursts into the hall;
 Before the dead man's bier he stood,
 Held forth the Cross besmear'd with blood;
 15 "The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
 Speed forth the signal! clansmen, speed!"

XVIII

- Angus, the heir of Duncan's line,
Sprung forth and seized the fatal sign.
In haste the stripling to his side
His father's dirk and broadsword tied;
5 But when he saw his mother's eye
Watch him in speechless agony,
Back to her open'd arms he flew,
Press'd on her lips a fond adieu—
“Alas!” she sobb'd,—“and yet be gone,
10 And speed thee forth, like Duncan's son!”
One look he cast upon the bier,
Dash'd from his eye the gathering tear,
Breathed deep to clear his labouring breast,
And toss'd aloft his bonnet crest,
15 Then, like the high-bred colt, when, freed,
First he essays his fire and speed,
He vanish'd, and o'er moor and moss
Sped forward with the Fiery Cross.
Suspended was the widow's tear,
20 While yet his footsteps she could hear;
And when she mark'd the benchman's eye
Wet with unwonted sympathy,
“Kinsman,” she said, “his race is run,
That should have sped thine errand on;
25 The oak has fall'n,—the sapling bough
Is all Duncraggan's shelter now.
Yet trust I well, his duty done,
The orphan's God will guard my son.—
And you, in many a danger true,
30 At Duncan's hest your blades that drew,
To arms, and guard that orphan's head!
Let babes and women wail the dead.”
Then weapon-clang, and martial call,
Resounded through the funeral hall,
35 While from the walls the attendant band
Snatch'd sword and targe, with hurried hand;

And short and flitting energy
 Glanced from the mourner's sunken eye,
 As if the sounds to warrior dear
 40 Might rouse her Duncan from his bier.
 But faded soon that borrow'd force;
 Grief claim'd his right, and tears their course.

XIX

Benledi saw the Cross of Fire,
 It glanced like lightning up Strath-Ire.
 O'er dale and hill the summons flew,
 Nor rest nor pause young Angus knew;
 5 The tear that gather'd in his eye
 He left the mountain breeze to dry;
 Until, where Teith's young waters roll
 Betwixt him and a wooded knoll,
 That graced the sable strath with green,
 10 The chapel of St. Bride was seen.
 Swoln was the stream, remote the bridge,
 But Angus paused not on the edge;
 Though the dark waves danced dizzily,
 Though reel'd his sympathetic eye,
 15 He dash'd amid the torrent's roar:
 His right hand high the crosslet bore,
 His left the pole-axe grasp'd, to guide
 And stay his footing in the tide.
 He stumbled twice—the foam splash'd high,
 20 With hoarser swell the stream raced by;
 And had he fall'n,—for ever there,
 Farewell Duncraggan's orphan heir!
 But still, as if in parting life,
 Firmer he grasp'd the Cross of strife,
 25 Until the opposing bank he gain'd,
 And up the chapel pathway strain'd.

XX

A blithesome rout, that morning tide,
 Had sought the chapel of St. Bride.

- Her troth Tombea's Mary gave
 To Norman, heir of Armandave.
 5 And, issuing from the Gothic arch,
 The bridal now resumed their march.
 In rude, but glad procession, came
 Bonneted sire and coif-clad dame;
 And plaided youth, with jest and jeer,
 10 Which snooded maiden would not hear;
 And children, that, unwitting why,
 Lent the gay shout their shrilly cry;
 And minstrels, that in measures vied
 Before the young and bonny bride,
 15 Whose downcast eye and cheek disclose
 The tear and blush of morning rose.
 With virgin step, and bashful hand,
 She held the 'kerchief's snowy band;
 The gallant bridegroom, by her side,
 20 Beheld his prize with victor's pride,
 And the glad mother in her ear
 Was closely whispering word of cheer.

XXI

- Who meets them at the churchyard gate?
 The messenger of fear and fate!
 Haste in his hurried accent lies,
 And grief is swimming in his eyes.
 5 All dripping from the recent flood,
 Panting and travel-soil'd he stood,
 The fatal sign of fire and sword
 Held forth, and spoke the appointed word—
 "The muster-place is Lanrick mead;
 10 Speed forth the signal! Norman, speed!"
 And must he change so soon the hand,
 Just link'd to his by holy band,
 For the fell Cross of blood and brand?
 And must the day, so blithe that rose,
 15 And promised rapture in the close,

Before its setting hour, divide
The bridegroom from the plighted bride?
O fatal doom!—it must! it must!
Clan-Alpine's cause, her Chieftain's trust,
20 Her summons dread, brook no delay;
Stretch to the race—away! away!

XXII

Yet slow he laid his plaid aside,
And, lingering, eyed his lovely bride,
Until he saw the starting tear
Speak woe he might not stop to cheer;
5 Then, trusting not a second look,
In haste he sped him up the brook,
Nor backward glanced, till on the heath
Where Lubnaig's lake supplies the Teith.
—What in the racer's bosom stirr'd?
10 The sickening pang of hope deferr'd,
And memory, with a torturing train
Of all his morning visions vain.
Mingled with love's impatience, came
The manly thirst for martial fame;
15 The stormy joy of mountaineers,
Ere yet they rush upon the spears;
And zeal for Clan and Chieftain burning,
And hope, from well-fought field returning,
With war's red honours on his crest,
20 To clasp his Mary to his breast.
Stung by such thoughts, o'er bank and brae,
Like fire from flint he glanced away,
While high resolve, and feeling strong,
Burst into voluntary song.

XXIII

Song

The heath this night must be my bed,
The bracken curtain for my head,
My lullaby the warder's tread,
Far, far, from love and thee, Mary;
5 To-morrow eve, more stilly laid,
My couch may be my bloody plaid,
My vesper song, thy wail, sweet maid!
It will not waken me, Mary!

I may not, dare not, fancy now
10 The grief that elouds thy lovely brow,
I dare not think upon thy vow,
And all it promised me, Mary.
No fond regret must Norman know;
When bursts Clan-Alpine on the foe,
15 His heart must be like bended bow,
His foot like arrow free, Mary.

A time will come with feeling fraught,
For, if I fall in battle fought,
Thy hapless lover's dying thought
20 Shall be a thought on thee, Mary.
And if return'd from conquer'd foes,
How blithely will the evening close,
How sweet the linnet sing repose,
To my young bride and me, Mary!

XXIV

Not faster o'er thy heathery braes,
Balquidder, speeds the midnight blaze,
Rushing in conflagration strong,
Thy deep ravines and dells along,
5 Wrapping thy cliffs in purple glow,
And reddening the dark lakes below;

- Nor faster speeds it, nor so far,
 As o'er thy heaths the voice of war.
 The signal roused to martial coil,
 10 The sullen margin of Loch Voil,
 Waked still Loch Doine, and to the source
 Alarm'd, Balvaig, thy swampy course;
 Thence southward turn'd its rapid road
 Adown Strath-Gartney's valley broad,
 15 Till rose in arms each man might claim
 A portion in Clan-Alpine's name,
 From the grey sire, whose trembling hand
 Could hardly buckle on his brand,
 To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
 20 Were yet scarce terror to the crow.
 Each valley, each sequester'd glen,
 Muster'd its little horde of men,
 That met as torrents from the height
 In Highland dales their streams unite,
 25 Still gathering, as they pour along,
 A voice more loud, a tide more strong,
 Till at the rendezvous they stood
 By hundreds prompt for blows and blood,
 Each train'd to arms since life began,
 30 Owning no tie but to his clan,
 No oath, but by his chieftain's hand,
 No law, but Roderick Dhu's command.

XXV

- That summer morn had Roderick Dhu
 Survey'd the skirts of Benvenue,
 And sent his scouts o'er hill and heath,
 To view the frontiers of Menteith.
 5 All backward came with news of truce;
 Still lay each martial Græme and Bruce,
 In Rednoch courts no horsemen wait,
 No banner waved on Cardross gate,
 On Duchray's towers no beacon shone,
 10 Nor scared the herons from Loch Con;

- All seem'd at peace.—Now wot ye why
 The Chieftain, with such anxious eye,
 Ere to the muster he repair,
 This western frontier scann'd with care?—
- 15 In Benvenue's most darksome cleft,
 A fair, though cruel, pledge was left;
 For Douglas, to his promise true,
 That morning from the isle withdrew,
 And in a deep sequester'd dell
- 20 Had sought a low and lonely cell.
 By many a bard, in Celtic tongue,
 Has Coir-nan-Uriskin been sung;
 A softer name the Saxons gave,
 And call'd the grot the Goblin-cave.

XXVI

- It was a wild and strange retreat,
 As e'er was trod by outlaw's feet.
 The dell, upon the mountain's crest,
 Yawn'd like a gash on warrior's breast;
- 5 Its trench had staid full many a rock,
 Hurl'd by primeval earthquake shock
 From Benvenue's grey summit wild,
 And here, in random ruin piled,
 They frown'd incumbent o'er the spot,
- 10 And form'd the rugged silvan grot.
 The oak and birch, with mingled shade,
 At noontide there a twilight made,
 Unless when short and sudden shone
 Some straggling beam on cliff or stone,
- 15 With such a glimpse as prophet's eye
 Gains on thy depth, Futurity.
 No murmur waked the solemn still,
 Save tinkling of a fountain rill;
 But when the wind chafed with the lake,
- 20 A sullen sound would upward break,
 With dashing hollow voice, that spoke
 The incessant war of wave and rock.

Suspended cliffs, with hideous sway,
 Seem'd nodding o'er the cavern grey.
 25 From such a den the wolf had sprung,
 In such the wild-cat leaves her young;
 Yet Douglas and his daughter fair
 Sought for a space their safety there.
 Grey Superstition's whisper dread
 30 Debarr'd the spot to vulgar tread;
 For there, she said, did fays resort,
 And satyrs hold their silvan court,
 By moonlight tread their mystic maze,
 And blast the rash beholder's gaze.

XXVII

Now eve, with western shadows long,
 Floated on Katrine bright and strong,
 When Roderick, with a chosen few,
 Repass'd the heights of Benvenue.
 5 Above the Goblin-cave they go,
 Through the wild pass of Beal-nam-bo.
 The prompt retainers speed before,
 To launch the shallop from the shore,
 For 'cross Loch Katrine lies his way
 10 To view the passes of Achray,
 And place his clansmen in array.
 Yet lags the Chief in musing mind,
 Unwonted sight, his men behind.
 A single page, to bear his sword,
 15 Alone attended on his lord;
 The rest their way through thickets break,
 And soon await him by the lake.
 It was a fair and gallant sight,
 To view them from the neighbouring height,
 20 By the low-levell'd sunbeam's light!
 For strength and stature, from the clan
 Each warrior was a chosen man,
 As even afar might well be seen,
 By their proud step and martial mien,

- 25 Their feathers dance, their tartans float,
Their targets gleam, as by the boat
A wild and warlike group they stand,
That well became such mountain-strand.

XXVIII

- Their Chief, with step reluctant, still
Was lingering on the craggy hill,
Hard by where turn'd apart the road
To Douglas's obscure abode.
- 5 It was but with that dawning morn
That Roderick Dhu had proudly sworn
To drown his love in war's wild roar,
Nor think of Ellen Douglas more;
But he who stems a stream with sand,
- 10 And fetters flame with flaxen band,
Has yet a harder task to prove—
By firm resolve to conquer love!
Eve finds the Chief, like restless ghost,
Still hovering near his treasure lost;
- 15 For though his haughty heart deny,
A parting meeting to his eye,
Still fondly strains his anxious ear,
The accents of her voice to hear,
And inly did he curse the breeze
- 20 That waked to sound the rustling trees
But hark! what mingles in the strain?
It is the harp of Allan-bane,
That wakes its measure slow and high,
Attuned to sacred minstrelsy.
- 25 What melting voice attends the strings?
'Tis Ellen, or an angel, sings.

XXIX

Hymn to the Virgin

Ave Maria! maiden mild!

Listen to a maiden's prayer!

Thou canst hear though from the wild,

Thou canst save amid despair.

5 Safe may we sleep beneath thy care,

Though banish'd, outcast, and reviled—

Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;

Mother, hear a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

10 *Ave Maria!* undefiled!

The flinty couch we now must share

Shall seem with down of eider piled,

If thy protection hover there.

The murky cavern's heavy air

15 Shall breathe of balm if thou hast smiled;

Then, Maiden! hear a maiden's prayer;

Mother, list a suppliant child!

Ave Maria!

Ave Maria! stainless styled!

20 Foul demons of the earth and air,

From this their wonted haunt exiled,

Shall flee before thy presence fair.

We bow us to our lot of care,

Beneath thy guidance reconciled;

25 Hear for a maid a maiden's prayer,

And for a father hear a child!

Ave Maria!

XXX

Died on the harp the closing hymn—

Unmoved in attitude and limb,

As list'ning still, Clan-Alpine's lord

Stood leaning on his heavy sword,

5 Until the page, with humble sign,

Twice pointed to the sun's decline.

- Then while his plaid he round him cast,
“It is the last time—’tis the last,”
He muttered thrice,—“the last time e’er
10 That angel voice shall Roderick hear!”
It was a goading thought—his stride
Hied hastier down the mountain-side;
Sullen he flung him in the boat,
And instant ’cross the lake it shot.
15 They landed in that silvery bay,
And eastward held their hasty way.
Till, with the latest beams of light,
The band arrived on Lanrick height,
Where muster’d in the vale below,
20 Clan-Alpine’s men in martial show.

XXXI

- A various scene the clansmen made,
Some sate, some stood, some slowly stray’d;
But most, with mantles folded round,
Were couch’d to rest upon the ground,
5 Scarce to be known by curious eye,
From the deep heather where they lie,
So well was match’d the tartan screen
With heath-bell dark and brackens green,
Unless where, here and there, a blade,
10 Or lance’s point, a glimmer made,
Like glow-worm twinkling through the shade.
But when, advancing through the gloom,
They saw the Chieftain’s eagle plume,
Their shout of welcome, shrill and wide,
15 Shook the steep mountain’s steady side.
Thrice it arose, and lake and fell
Three times return’d the martial yell;
It died upon Bochastle’s plain,
And Silence claim’d her evening reign.

CANTO FOURTH

The Prophecy

I

- "THE rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
 And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears;
 The rose is sweetest wash'd with morning dew,
 And love is loveliest when embalm'd in tears.
 5 O wilding rose, whom fancy thus endears,
 I bid your blossoms in my bonnet wave,
 Emblem of hope and love through future years!"—
 Thus spoke young Norman, heir of Armandave,
 What time the sun arose on Vennachar's broad wave

II

- Such fond conceit, half said, half sung,
 Love prompted to the bridegroom's tongue:
 All while he stripp'd the wild-rose spray,
 His axe and bow beside him lay,
 5 For on a pass 'twixt lake and wood,
 A wakeful sentinel he stood.
 Hark!—on the rock a footstep rung,
 And instant to his arms he sprung.
 "Stand, or thou diest!—What, Malise?—soon
 10 Art thou return'd from Braes of Doune.
 By thy keen step and glance I know,
 Thou bring'st us tidings of the foe."—
 (For while the Fiery Cross hied on,
 On distant scout had Malise gone.)
 15 "Where sleeps the Chief?" the henchman said.
 "Apart, in yonder misty glade;
 To his lone couch I'll be your guide."—
 Then call'd a slumberer by his side,

- And stirr'd him with his slacken'd bow—
 20 “Up, up, Glentarkin! rouse thee, ho!
 We seek the Chieftain; on the track,
 Keep eagle watch till I come back.”

III

- Together up the pass they sped;
 “What of the foeman?” Norman said.—
 “Varying reports from near and far;
 ‘This certain,—that a band of war
 5 Has for two days been ready boune,
 At prompt command, to march to Doune;
 King James, the while, with princely powers,
 Holds revelry in Stirling towers.
 Soon will this dark and gathering cloud
 10 Speak on our glens in thunder loud.
 Inured to bide such bitter bout,
 The warrior’s plaid may bear it out;
 But, Norman, how wilt thou provide
 A shelter for thy bonny bride?”—
 15 “What! know ye not that Roderick’s care
 To the lone isle hath caused repair
 Each maid and matron of the clan,
 And every child and aged man
 Unfit for arms; and given his charge,
 20 Nor skiff nor shallop, boat nor barge,
 Upon these lakes shall float at large,
 But all beside the islet moor,
 That such dear pledge may rest secure?” —

IV

- “‘T is well advised—the Chieftain’s plan
 Bespeaks the father of his clan.
 But wherefore sleeps Sir Roderick Dhu
 Apart from all his followers true?”—
 5 “It is, because last evening-tide
 Brian an augury hath tried,

Of that dread kind which must not be
 Unless in dread extremity,
 The Taghairn call'd; by which, afar,
 10 Our sires foresaw the events of war.
 Duncraggan's milk-white bull they slew."

MALISE

"Ah! well the gallant brute I knew,
 The choicest of the prey we had,
 When swept our merry-men Gallangad.
 15 His hide was snow, his horns were dark,
 His red eye glow'd like fiery spark;
 So fierce, so tameless, and so fleet,
 Sore did he cumber our retreat,
 And kept our stoutest kernes in awe,
 20 Even at the pass of Beal 'maha.
 But steep and flinty was the road,
 And sharp the hurrying pikeman's goad,
 And when we came to Dennan's Row,
 A child might scatheless stroke his brow."—

V

NORMAN

"That bull was slain: his reeking hide
 They stretch'd the cataract beside,
 Whose waters their wild tumult toss
 Adown the black and craggy boss
 5 Of that huge cliff, whose ample verge
 Tradition calls the Hero's Targe.
 Couch'd on a shelve beneath its brink,
 Close where the thundering torrents sink,
 Rocking beneath their headlong sway,
 10 And drizzled by the ceaseless spray,
 Midst groan of rock, and roar of stream,
 The wizard waits prophetic dream.
 Nor distant rests the Chief;—but hush!
 See, gliding slow through mist and bush,

- 15 The hermit gains yon rock, and stands
 To gaze upon our slumbering bands.
 Seems he not, Malise, like a ghost,
 That hovers o'er a slaughter'd host?
 Or raven on the blasted oak,
 20 That, watching while the deer is broke,
 His morsel claims with sullen croak?"

MALISE

- "Peace! peace! to other than to me,
 Thy words were evil angury;
 But still I hold Sir Roderick's blade
 25 Clan-Alpine's omen and her aid,
 Not aught that, glean'd from heaven or hell,
 Yon fiend-begotten Monk can tell.
 The Chieftain joins him, see—and now,
 Together they descend the brow."

VI

- And, as they came, with Alpine's Lord
 The Hermit Monk held solemn word:—
 "Roderick! it is a fearful strife,
 For man endow'd with mortal life,
 5 Whose shroud of sentient clay can still
 Feel feverish pang and fainting chill,
 Whose eye can stare in stony trance,
 Whose hair can rouse like warrior's lance,—
 'T is hard for such to view, unfurl'd,
 10 The curtain of the future world.
 Yet, witness every quaking limb,
 My sunken pulse, my eyeballs dim,
 My soul with harrowing anguish torn,—
 This for my Chieftain have I borne!—
 15 The shapes that sought my fearful couch,
 A human tongue may ne'er avouch;
 No mortal man,—save he, who, bred

- Between the living and the dead,
 Is gifted beyond nature's law,—
 20 Had e'er survived to say he saw.
 At length the fatal answer came,
 In characters of living flame!
 Not spoke in word, nor blazed in scroll,
 But borne and branded on my soul;—
 25 WHICH SPILLS THE FOREMOST FOEMAN'S LIFE,
 THAT PARTY CONQUERS IN THE STRIFE.”—

VII

- “Thanks, Brian, for thy zeal and care!
 Good is thine augury, and fair.
 Clan-Alpine ne'er in battle stood,
 But first our broadswords tasted blood.
 5 A surer vietim still I know,
 Self-offer'd to the auspicious blow;
 A spy has sought my land this morn,—
 No eve shall witness his return!
 My followers guard each pass's mouth,
 10 To east, to westward, and to south;
 Red Murdoch, bribed to be his guide,
 Has charge to lead his steps aside,
 Till, in deep path or dingle brown,
 He light on those shall bring him down.
 15 —But sec, who comes his news to show!
 Malise! what tidings of the foe?”—

VIII

- “At Doune, o'er many a spear and glaive
 Two Barons proud their banners wave.
 I saw the Moray's silver star,
 And mark'd the sable pale of Mar.”—
 5 “By Alpine's soul, high tidings those!
 I love to hear of worthy foes.
 When move they on?”—“To-morrow's noon
 Will see them here for battle boune.”—

- "Then shall it see a meeting stern!—
 10 But, for the place—say, couldst thou learn
 Nought of the friendly clans of Earn?
 Strengthen'd by them, we well might bide
 The battle on Benledi's side.
 Thou couldst not?—well! Clan-Alpine's men
 15 Shall man the Trosachs' shaggy glen;
 Within Loch Katrine's gorge we'll fight,
 All in our maids' and matrons' sight,
 Each for his hearth and household fire,
 Father for child, and son for sire,—
 20 Lover for maid beloved!—But why—
 Is it the breeze affects mine eye?
 Or dost thou come, ill-omen'd tear!
 A messenger of doubt and fear?
 No! sooner may the Saxon lance
 25 Unfix Benledi from his stance,
 Than doubt or terror can pierce through
 The unyielding heart of Roderick Dhu!
 'T is stubborn as his trusty targe.—
 Each to his post—all know their charge."
 30 The pibroch sounds, the bands advance,
 The broadswords gleam, the banners dance,
 Obedient to the Chieftain's glance.
 —I turn me from the martial roar,.
 And seek Coir-Uriskin once more.

IX

- Where is the Douglas?—he is gone;
 And Ellen sits on the grey stone
 Fast by the cave, and makes her moan;
 While vainly Allan's words of cheer
 5 Are pour'd on her unheeding ear.—
 "He will return—Dear lady, trust!—
 With joy return;—he will—he must.
 Well was it time to seek afar,
 Some refuge from impending war,

- 10 When e'en Clan-Alpine's rugged swarm
 Are cow'd by the approaching storm.
 I saw their boats with many a light,
 Floating the live-long yesternight,
 Shifting like flashes darted forth
 15 By the red streamers of the north;
 I mark'd at morn how close they ride,
 Thiek moor'd by the lone islet's side,
 Like wild-ducks couching in the fen,
 When stoops the hawk upon the glen.
 20 Since this rude race dare not abide
 The peril on the mainland side,
 Shall not thy noble father's care
 Some safe retreat for thee prepare?"—

X

ELLEN

- “No, Allan, no! Pretext so kind
 My wakeful terrors could not blind.
 When in such tender tone, yet grave,
 Douglas a parting blessing gave,
 5 The tear that glisten'd in his eye
 Drown'd not his purpose fix'd and high.
 My soul, though feminine and weak,
 Can image his; e'en as the lake,
 Itself disturb'd by slightest stroke,
 10 Reflects the invulnerable rock.
 He hears report of battle rife,
 He deems himself the cause of strife.
 I saw him redden, when the theme
 Turn'd, Allan, on thine idle dream
 15 Of Malcolm Græme in fetters bound,
 Which I, thou saidst, about him wound.
 Think'st thou he trow'd thine omen aught?
 Oh no! 't was apprehensive thought
 For the kind youth,—for Roderick too—
 20 (Let me be just) that friend so true;

- In danger both, and in our cause!
 Minstrel, the Douglas dare not pause.
 Why else that solemn warning given,
 'If not on earth, we meet in heaven!'
 25 Why else, to Cambus-kenneth's fane
 If eve return him not again,
 Am I to hie, and make me known?
 Alas! he goes to Scotland's throne,
 Buys his friend's safety with his own;—
 30 He goes to do—what I had done,
 Had Douglas' daughter been his son!"—

XI

- "Nay, lovely Ellen!—dearest, nay!
 If aught should his return delay,
 He only named yon holy fane
 As fitting place to meet again.
 5 Be sure he's safe; and for the Græme,—
 Heaven's blessing on his gallant name!—
 My vision'd sight may yet prove true,
 Nor bode of ill to him or you.
 When did my gifted dream beguile?
 10 Think of the stranger at the isle,
 And think upon the harpings slow,
 That presaged this approaching woe!
 Sooth was my prophecy of fear;
 Believe it when it augurs cheer.
 15 Would we had left this dismal spot!
 Ill luck still haunts a fairy grot.
 Of such a wondrous tale I know—
 Dear lady, change that look of woe,
 My harp was wont thy grief to cheer."

ELLEN

- 20 "Well, be it as thou wilt; I hear,
 But cannot stop the bursting tear."
 The Minstrel tried his simple art,
 But distant far was Ellen's heart.

Ballad

ALICE BRAND

Merry it is in the good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
When the deer sweeps by, and the hounds are in cry,
And the hunter's horn is ringing.

5 "O Alice Brand, my native land
Is lost for love of you;
And we must hold by wood and wold,
As outlaws wont to do.

10 "O Alice, 't was all for thy locks so bright,
And 't was all for thine eyes so blue,
That on the night of our luckless flight,
Thy brother bold I slew.

"Now must I teach to hew the beech
The hand that held the glaive,
15 For leaves to spread our lowly bed,
And stakes to fence our cave.

"And for vest of pall, thy fingers small,
That wont on harp to stray,
A cloak must shear from the slaughter'd deer,
20 To keep the cold away."—

"O Richard! if my brother died,
'T was but a fatal chance;
For darkling was the battle tried,
And fortune sped the lance.

25 "If pall and vair no more I wear,
Nor thou the crimson sheen,
As warm, we'll say, is the russet grey,
As gay the forest-green.

“And, Richard, if our lot be hard,
30 And lost thy native land,
Still Alice has her own Richard,
And he his Alice Brand.”

XIII

Ballad—Continued

’T is merry, ’t is merry, in good greenwood,
So blithe Lady Alice is singing;
On the beech’s pride, and oak’s brown side,
Lord Richard’s axe is ringing.

5 Up spoke the moody Elfin King,
Who wonn’d within the hill,—
Like wind in the porch of a ruin’d church,
His voice was ghostly shrill.

“Why sounds yon stroke on beech and oak,
10 Our moonlight circle’s screen?
Or who comes here to chase the deer,
Beloved of our Elfin Queen?
Or who may dare on wold to wear
The fairies’ fatal green?”

15 “Up, Urgan, up! to yon mortal hie,
For thou wert ehristen’d man;
For cross or sign thou wilt not fly,
For mutter’d word or ban.

“Lay on him the curse of the wither’d heart,
20 The curse of the sleepless eye;
Till he wish and pray that his life would part,
Nor yet find leave to die.”

XIV

Ballad—Continued

'T is merry, 't is merry, in good greenwood,
 Though the birds have still'd their singing;
 The evening blaze doth Alice raise,
 And Richard is fagots bringing.

5 Up Urgan starts, that hideous dwarf,
 Before Lord Richard stands,
 And, as he cross'd and bless'd himself,
 "I fear not sign," quoth the grisly elf,
 "That is made with bloody hands."

10 But out then spoke she, Alice Brand,
 That woman void of fear,—
 "And if there's blood upon his hand,
 'T is but the blood of deer."—

"Now loud thou liest, thou bold of mood!
 15 It cleaves unto his hand,
 The stain of thine own kindly blood,
 The blood of Ethert Brand."

Then forward stepp'd she, Alice Brand,
 And made the holy sign,—
 20 "And if there's blood on Richard's hand,
 A spotless hand is mine.

"And I conjure thee, Demon elf,
 By Him whom Demons fear,
 To show us whence thou art thyself,
 25 And what thine errand here?"—

XV

Ballad—Continued

"'T is merry, 't is merry, in Fairy-land
 When fairy birds are singing,

When the court doth ride by their monarch's side,
With bit and bridle ringing:

5 "And gaily shines the Fairy-land—
But all is glistening show,
Like the idle gleam that December's beam
Can dart on ice and snow.

10 "And fading, like that varied gleam,
Is our inconstant shape,
Who now like knight and lady seem,
And now like dwarf and ape.

"It was between the night and day,
When the Fairy King has power,
15 That I sunk down in a sinful fray,
And, 'twixt life and death, was snatch'd away
To the joyless Elfin bower.

"But wist I of a woman bold,
Who thrice my brow durst sign,
20 I might regain my mortal mould,
As fair a form as thine."

She cross'd him once—she cross'd him twice—
That lady was so brave;
The fouler grew his goblin hue,
25 The darker grew the cave.

She cross'd him trice, that lady bold;
He rose beneath her hand
The fairest knight on Scottish mould,
Her brother, Ethert Brand!

30 Merry it is in good greenwood,
When the mavis and merle are singing,
But merrier were they in Dunfermline grey.
When all the bells were ringing.

XVI

- Just as the minstrel sounds were staid,
A stranger climb'd the steepy glade;
His martial step, his stately mien,
His hunting suit of Lincoln green,
5 His eagle glance, remembrance claims—
'T is Snowdown's Knight, 't is James Fitz-James.
Ellen beheld as in a dream,
Then, starting, scarce suppress'd a scream:
"O stranger! in such hour of fear,
10 What evil hap has brought thee here?"—
"An evil hap how can it be,
That bids me look again on thee?
By promise bound, my former guide
Met me betimes this morning tide,
15 And marshall'd, over bank and bourne,
The happy path of my return."—
"The happy path!—what! said he nought
Of war, of battle to be fought,
Of guarded pass?"—"No, by my faith!
20 Nor saw I aught could augur seathe."—
"O haste thee, Allan, to the kern,
—Yonder his tartans I discern;
Learn thou his purpose, and conjure
That he will guide the stranger sure!—
25 What prompted thee, unhappy man?
The meanest serf in Roderick's clan
Had not been bribed by love or fear,
Unknown to him to guide thee here."—

XVII

- "Sweet Ellen, dear my life must be
Since it is worthy care from thee;
Yet life I hold but idle breath,
When love or honour's weigh'd with death.
5 Then let me profit by my chance,
And speak my purpose bold at once.

- I come to bear thee from a wild,
 Where ne'er before such blossom smiled;
 By this soft hand to lead thee far
 10 From frantic scenes of feud and war.
 Near Bochastle my horses wait;
 They bear us soon to Stirling gate.
 I'll place thee in a lovely bower,
 I'll guard thee like a tender flower"—
 15 "O! hush, Sir Knight! 'twere female art,
 To say I do not read thy heart;
 Too much, before, my selfish ear
 Was idly soothed my praise to hear.
 That fatal bait hath lured thee back,
 20 In deathful hour, o'er dangerous track;
 And how, O how, can I atone
 The wreck my vanity brought on!—
 One way remains—I'll tell him all—
 Yes! struggling bosom, forth it shall!
 25 Thou, whose light folly bears the blame,
 Buy thine own pardon with thy shame!
 But first—my father is a man
 Outlaw'd and exiled, under ban;
 The price of blood is on his head,
 30 With me 'twere infamy to wed.—
 Still wouldst thou speak?—then hear the truth!
 Fitz-James, there is a noble youth,—
 If yet he is!—exposed for me
 And mine to dread extremity—
 35 Thou hast the secret of my heart;
 Forgive, be generous, and depart!"

XVIII

- Fitz-James knew every wily train
 A lady's fickle heart to gain,
 But here he knew and felt them vain.
 There shot no glance from Ellen's eye,
 5 To give her steadfast speech the lie;

- In maiden confidence she stood,
 Though mantled in her cheek the blood,
 And told her love with such a sigh
 Of deep and hopeless agony,
 10 As death had seal'd her Malcolm's doom,
 And she sat sorrowing on his tomb.
 Hope vanish'd from Fitz-James's eye,
 But not with hope fled sympathy.
 He proffer'd to attend her side,
 15 As brother would a sister guide.—
 "O! little know'st thou Roderick's heart!
 Safer for both we go apart.
 O haste thee, and from Allan learn,
 If thou may'st trust yon wily kern."
 20 With hand upon his forehead laid,
 The conflict of his mind to shade,
 A parting step or two he made;
 Then, as some thought had cross'd his brain,
 He paused, and turn'd, and came again.

XIX

- "Hear, lady, yet, a parting word!—
 It chanced in fight that my poor sword
 Preserved the life of Scotland's lord.
 This ring the grateful Monarch gave,
 5 And bade, when I had boon to crave,
 To bring it back, and boldly claim
 The recompense that I would name.
 Ellen, I am no courtly lord,
 But one who lives by lance and sword,
 10 Whose castle is his helm and shield,
 His lordship the embattled field.
 What from a prince can I demand,
 Who neither reck of state nor land?
 Ellen, thy hand—the ring is thine;
 15 Each guard and usher knows the sign.
 Seek thou the king without delay;
 This signet shall secure thy way;

- And claim thy suit, whate'er it be,
As ransom of his pledge to me.”
20 He placed the golden circlet on,
Paused—kiss'd her hand—and then was gone.
The aged Minstrel stood aghast,
So hastily Fitz-James shot past.
He join'd his guide, and wending down
25 The ridges of the mountain brown,
Across the stream they took their way,
That joins Loch Katrine to Achray.

XX

- All in the Trosachs' glen was still,
Noontide was sleeping on the hill:
Sudden his guide whoop'd loud and high—
“Murdoch! was that a signal cry?”—
5 He stammer'd forth—“I shout to scare
Yon raven from his dainty fare.”
He look'd—he knew the raven's prey,
His own brave steed:—“Ah! gallant grey!
For thee—for me, perchance—'twere well
10 We ne'er had seen the Trosachs' dell.—
Murdoch, move first—but silently;
Whistle or whoop, and thou shalt die!”
Jealous and sullen on they fared,
Each silent, each upon his guard.

XXI

- Now wound the path its dizzy ledge
Around a precipice's edge,
When lo! a wasted female form,
Blighted by wrath of sun and storm,
5 In tatter'd weeds and wild array,
Stood on a cliff beside the way,
And glancing round her restless eye,
Upon the wood, the rock, the sky,
Seem'd nought to mark, yet all to spy.

- 10 Her brow was wreath'd with gaudy broom;
 With gesture wild she waved a plume
 Of feathers, which the eagles fling
 To crag and cliff from dusky wing;
 Such spoils her desperate step had sought,
 15 Where scarce was footing for the goat.
 The tartan plaid she first descried,
 And shriek'd till all the rocks replied;
 As loud she laugh'd when near they drew,
 For then the Lowland garb she knew;
 20 And then her hands she wildly wrung,
 And then she wept, and then she sung—
 She sung!—the voice, in better time,
 Perchance to harp or lute might chime;
 And now, though strain'd and roughen'd, still
 25 Rung wildly sweet to dale and hill.

XXII

Song

- They bid me sleep, they bid me pray,
 They say my brain is warp'd and wrung—
 I cannot sleep on Highland brae,
 I cannot pray in Highland tongue.
 5 But were I now where Allan glides,
 Or heard my native Devan's tides,
 So sweetly would I rest, and pray
 That Heaven would close my wintry day!
- 'Twas thus my hair they bade me braid,
 10 They made me to the church repair;
 It was my bridal morn they said,
 And my true love would meet me there.
 But woe betide the cruel guile,
 That drown'd in blood the morning smile!
 15 And woe betide the fairy dream!
 I only waked to sob and scream.

XXIII

- "Who is this maid? what means her lay?
 She hovers o'er the hollow way,
 And flutters wide her mantle grey,
 As the lone heron spreads his wing,
 5 By twilight, o'er a haunted spring."
 "'T is Blanche of Devan," Murdoch said,
 "A crazed and captive Lowland maid,
 Ta'en on the morn she was a bride,
 When Roderick foray'd Devan-side.
 10 The gay bridegroom resistance made,
 And felt our Chief's unconquer'd blade.
 I marvel she is now at large
 But oft she 'scapes from Maudlin's charge.—
 Hence, brain-sick fool!"—He raised his bow:—
 15 "Now, if thou strik'st her but one blow,
 I'll pitch thee from the cliff as far
 As ever peasant pitch'd a bar!"—
 "Thanks, champion, thanks!" the Maniac cried,
 And press'd her to Fitz-James's side.
 20 "See the grey pennons I prepare,
 To seek my true love through the air!
 I will not lend that savage groom,
 To break his fall, one downy plume!
 No!—deep amid disjointed stones,
 25 The wolves shall batten on his bones,
 And then shall his detested plaid,
 By bush and brier in mid air staid,
 Wave forth a banner fair and free,
 Meet signal for their revelry."—

XXIV

- "Hush thee, poor maiden, and be still!"—
 "O! thou look'st kindly, and I will.—
 Mine eye has dried and wasted been,
 But still it loves the Lincoln green;
 5 And, though mine ear is all unstrung,
 Still, still it loves the Lowland tongue.

“For O my sweet William was forester true,
He stole poor Blanche’s heart away!
His coat it was all of the greenwood hue,
10 And so blithely he trill’d the Lowland lay!

“It was not that I meant to tell . . .
But thou art wise and guessest well.”
Then, in a low and broken tone,
And hurried note, the song went on.
15 Still on the Clansman, fearfully,
She fix’d her apprehensive eye;
Then turn’d it on the Knight, and then
Her look glanced wildly o’er the glen.

XXV

“The toils are pitch’d, and the stakes are set,
Ever sing merrily, merrily;
The bows they bend, and the knives they whet,
Hunters live so cheerily.
5 “It was a stag, a stag of ten,
Bearing its branches sturdily;
He came stately down the glen,
Ever sing hardily, hardily.

“It was there he met with a wounded doe,
10 She was bleeding deathfully;
She warn’d him of the toils below,
O, so faithfully, faithfully!

“He had an eye, and he could heed,
Ever sing warily, warily;
15 He had a foot, and he could speed—
Hunters watch so narrowly.”

XXVI

Fitz-James’s mind was passion-toss’d,
When Ellen’s hints and fears were lost;

- But Murdoch's shout suspicion wrought,
 And Blanche's song conviction brought.—
 5 Not like a stag that spies the snare,
 But lion of the hunt aware,
 He waved at once his blade on high,
 "Disclose thy treachery, or die!"
 Forth at full speed the Clansman flew,
 10 But in his race his bow he drew.
 The shaft just grazed Fitz-James's crest,
 And thrilled in Blanche's faded breast.—
 Murdoch of Alpine! prove thy speed,
 For ne'er had Alpine's son such need!
 15 With heart of fire, and foot of wind,
 The fierce avenger is behind!
 Fate judges of the rapid strife—
 The forfeit death—the prize is life!
 Thy kindred ambush lies before,
 20 Close couch'd upon the heathery moor;
 Them couldst thou reach!—it may not be—
 Thine ambush'd kin thou ne'er shalt see,
 The fiery Saxon gains on thee!
 —Resistless speeds the deadly thrust,
 25 As lightning strikes the pine to dust;
 With foot and hand Fitz-James must strain,
 Ere he can win his blade again.
 Bent o'er the fall'n, with falcon eye,
 He grimly smiled to see him die;
 30 Then slower wended back his way,
 Where the poor maiden bleeding lay.

XXVII

- She sate beneath a birchen-tree,
 Her elbow resting on her knee;
 She had withdrawn the fatal shaft,
 And gazed on it, and feebly laugh'd;
 5 Her wreath of broom and feathers grey,
 Daggled with blood, beside her lay.

The Knight to staunch the life-stream tried,—
 “Stranger, it is in vain!” she cried.
 “This hour of death has given me more
 10 Of reason’s power than years before;
 For, as these ebbing veins decay,
 My frenzied visions fade away.
 A helpless injured wretch I die,
 And something tells me in thine eye,
 15 That thou wert mine avenger born.—
 Seest thou this tress?—O! still I’ve worn
 This little tress of yellow hair,
 Through danger, frenzy, and despair!
 It once was bright and clear as thine,
 20 But blood and tears have dimm’d its shine.
 I will not tell thee when ’twas shred,
 Nor from what guiltless victim’s head—
 My brain would turn!—but it shall wave
 Like plumage on thy helmet brave,
 25 Till sun and wind shall bleach the stain,
 And thou wilt bring it me again.—
 I waver still.—O God! more bright
 Let reason beam her parting light!—
 O! by thy knighthood’s honour’d sign,
 30 And for thy life preserved by mine,
 When thou shalt see a darksome man,
 Who boasts him Chief of Alpine’s Clan,
 With tartans broad and shadowy plume
 And hand of blood, and brow of gloom,
 35 Be thy heart bold, thy weapon strong,
 And wreak poor Blanche of Devan’s wrong!—
 They watch for thee by pass and fell. . .
 Avoid the path . . . O God! . . . farewell.”

XXVIII

A kindly heart had brave Fitz-James;
 Fast pour’d his eyes at pity’s claims,
 And now, with mingled grief and ire,
 He saw the murder’d maid expire.

- 5 "God, in my need, be my relief,
As I wreak this on yonder Chief!"
A lock from Blanche's tresses fair
He blended with her bridegroom's hair;
The mingled braid in blood he dyed,
10 And placed it on his bonnet-side:
"By Him whose word is truth! I swear,
No other favour will I wear,
Till this sad token I imbrue
In the best blood of Roderick Dhu!"
15 —But hark! what means yon faint halloo?
The chase is up,—but they shall know,
The stag at bay's a dangerous foe."
Barr'd from the known but guarded way,
Through copse and cliffs Fitz-James must stray,
20 And oft must change his desperate track,
By stream and precipice turn'd back.
Heartless, fatigued, and faint, at length,
From lack of food and loss of strength,
He couch'd him in a thicket hoar,
25 And thought his toils and perils o'er:—
"Of all my rash adventures past,
This frantic feat must prove the last!
Who e'er so mad but might have guess'd,
That all this Highland hornet's nest
30 Would muster up in swarms so soon
As e'er they heard of bands at Doune?—
Like bloodhounds now they search me out,—
Hark, to the whistle and the shout!—
If further through the wilds I go,
35 I only fall upon the foe:
I'll couch me here till evening grey,
Then darkling try my dangerous way."

XXIX

The shades of eve come slowly down,
The woods are wrapped in deeper brown,
The owl awakens from her dell,
The fox is heard upon the fell;

- 5 Enough remains of glimmering light
 To guide the wanderer's steps aright,
 Yet not enough from far to show
 His figure to the watchful foe.
 With cautious step, and ear awake,
 10 He climbs the crag and threads the brake;
 And not the summer solstice, there,
 Tempered the midnight mountain air,
 But every breeze, that swept the wold,
 Benumb'd his drenched limbs with cold.
 15 In dread, in danger, and alone,
 Famish'd and chill'd, through ways unknown,
 Tangled and steep, be journey'd on;
 Till, as a rock's huge point he turn'd,
 A watch-fire close before him burn'd.

XXX

- Beside its embers red and clear,
 Bask'd, in his plaid, a mountaineer;
 And up he sprung with sword in hand,—
 "Thy name and purpose! Saxon, stand!"
 5 "A stranger." "What dost thou require?"—
 "Rest and a guide, and food and fire.
 My life's beset, my path is lost,
 The gale has chill'd my limbs with frost."—
 "Art thou a friend to Roderick?" "No."
 10 "Thou dardest not call thyself a foe?"
 "I dare! to him and all the band
 He brings to aid his murderous hand,"—
 "Bold words!—but, though the beast of game
 The privilege of chase may claim,
 15 Though space and law the stag we lend,
 Ere hound we slip, or bow we bend,
 Who ever reck'd, where, how, or when,
 The prowling fox was trapp'd or slain?
 Thus treacherous scouts,—yet sure they lie,
 20 Who say thou camest a secret spy!"—

- “They do, by heaven!—Come Roderick Dhu,
And of his clan the boldest two,
And let me but till morning rest,
I write the falsehood on their crest.”
- 25 “If by the blaze I mark aright,
Thou bearest the belt and spur of Knight.”
“Then by these tokens may'st thou know
Each proud oppressor's mortal foe.”—
“Enough, enough; sit down and share
30 A soldier's couch, a soldier's fare.”

XXXI

- He gave him of his Highland cheer,
The harden'd flesh of mountain deer;
Dry fuel on the fire he laid,
And bade the Saxon share his plaid.
- 5 He tended him like welcome guest,
Then thus his further speech address'd:—
“Stranger, I am to Roderick Dhu
A clansman born, a kinsman true;
Each word against his honour spoke,
10 Demands of me avenging stroke;
Yet more,—upon thy fate, 't is said,
A mighty augury is laid.
It rests with me to wind my horn,—
Thou art with numbers overborne;
- 15 It rests with me, here, brand to brand
Worn as thou art, to bid thee stand:
But, not for clan, nor kindred's cause,
Will I depart from honour's laws;
To assail a wearied man were shame,
20 And stranger is a holy name;
Guidance and rest, and food and fire,
In vain he never must require.
Then rest thee here till dawn of day;
Myself will guide thee on the way,
25 O'er stock and stone, through watch and ward,
Till past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard,

As far as Coilantogle's ford;
From thence thy warrant is thy sword."
"I take thy courtesy, by heaven,
30 As freely as 't is nobly given!"
"Well, rest thee; for the bittern's cry
Sings us the lake's wild lullaby."
With that he shook the gather'd heath,
And spread his plaid upon the wreath;
35 And the brave foemen, side by side,
Lay peaceful down like brothers tried,
And slept until the dawning beam
Purpled the mountain and the stream.

CANTO FIFTH

The Combat

I

FAIR as the earliest beam of eastern light,
When first, by the bewilder'd pilgrim spied,
It smiles upon the dreary brow of night,
And silvers o'er the torrent's foaming tide,
5 And lights the fearful path on mountain side;—
Fair as that beam, although the fairest far,
Giving to horror grace, to danger pride,
Shine martial Faith, and Courtesy's bright star,
Through all the wreckful storms that cloud the
brow of War.

II

That early beam, so fair and sheen,
Was twinkling through the hazel screen,
When, rousing at its glimmer red,
The warriors left their lowly bed,
5 Look'd out upon the dappled sky,
Mutter'd their soldier matins by,
And then awaked their fire, to steal,
As short and rude, their soldier meal.
That o'er, the Gael around him threw
10 His graceful plaid of varied hue,
And, true to promise, led the way,
By thicket green and mountain grey.
A wildering path! —they winded now
Along the precipice's brow,
15 Commanding the rich scenes beneath,
The windings of the Forth and Teith,
And all the vales between that lie,
Till Stirling's turrets melt in sky;

Then, sunk in copse, their farthest glance
 20 Gain'd not the length of horseman's lance.
 'T was oft so steep, the foot was fain
 Assistance from the hand to gain;
 So tangled oft, that, bursting through,
 Each hawthorn shed her showers of dew,—
 25 That diamond dew, so pure and clear,
 It rivals all but Beauty's tear!

III

At length they came where, stern and steep,
 The hill sinks down upon the deep.
 Here Vennachar in silver flows,
 There, ridge on ridge, Benledi rose;
 5 Ever the hollow path twined on,
 Beneath steep bank and threatening stone;
 An hundred men might hold the post
 With hardihood against a host.
 The rugged mountain's scanty cloak
 10 Was dwarfish shrubs of birch and oak,
 With shingles bare, and cliffs between,
 And patches bright of bracken green,
 And heather black, that waved so high,
 It held the copse in rivalry.
 15 But where the lake slept deep and still,
 Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill;
 And oft both path and hill were torn,
 Where wintry torrents down had borne,
 And heap'd upon the cumber'd land
 20 Its wreck of gravel, rocks, and sand.
 So toilsome was the road to trace,
 The guide, abating of his pace,
 Led slowly through the pass's jaws,
 And ask'd Fitz-James, by what strange cause
 25 He sought these wilds? traversed by few,
 Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

IV

- “Brave Gael, my pass, in danger tried,
Hangs in my belt, and by my side;
Yet, sooth to tell,” the Saxon said,
“I dreamt not now to claim its aid.
5 When here, but three days since, I came,
Bewilder’d in pursuit of game,
All seem’d as peaceful and as still,
As the mist slumbering on yon hill;
Thy dangerous Chief was then afar,
10 Nor soon expected back from war.
Thus said, at least, my mountain-guide,
Though deep perchance the villain lied.”—
“Yet why a second venture try?”—
“A warrior thou, and ask me why!—
15 Moves our free course by such fix’d cause,
As gives the poor mechanic laws?
Enough, I sought to drive away
The lazy hours of peaceful day;
Slight cause will then suffice to guide
20 A Knight’s free footsteps far and wide,—
A falcon flown, a greyhound stray’d,
The merry glance of mountain maid:
Or, if a path be dangerous known,
The danger’s self is lure alone.”—

V

- “Thy secret keep, I urge thee not;—
Yet, ere again ye sought this spot,
Say, heard ye nought of Lowland war,
Against Clan-Alpine, raised by Mar?”
5 —“No, by my word;—of bands prepared
To guard King James’s sports I heard;
Nor doubt I aught, but, when they hear
This muster of the mountaineer,
Their pennons will abroad be flung,
10 Which else in Doune had peaceful hung.”—

- “Free be they flung!—for we were loth
 Their silken folds should feast the moth.
 Free be they flung!—as free shall wave
 Clan-Alpine’s pine in banner brave.
 15 But, Stranger, peaceful since you came,
 Bewilder’d in the mountain game,
 Whence the bold boast by which you show
 Vich-Alpine’s vow’d and mortal foe?”—
 “Warrior, but yester-morn, I knew
 20 Nought of thy Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 Save as an outlaw’d desperate man,
 The chief of a rebellious clan,
 Who, in the Regent’s court and sight,
 With ruffian dagger stabb’d a knight:
 25 Yet this alone might from his part
 Sever each true and loyal heart.”

VI

- Wrothful at such arraignment foul,
 Dark lower’d the clansman’s sable scowl.
 A space he paused, then sternly said,
 “And heard’st thou why he drew his blade?
 5 Heard’st thou that shameful word and blow
 Brought Roderick’s vengeance on his foe?
 What reck’d the Chieftain if he stood
 On Highland heath, or Holy-Rood?
 He rights such wrong where it is given,
 10 If it were in the court of heaven.”—
 “Still was it outrage;—yet, ’t is true,
 Not then claim’d sovereignty his due;
 While Albany, with feeble hand,
 Held borrow’d truncheon of command,
 15 The young King, mew’d in Stirling tower,
 Was stranger to respect and power.
 But then, thy Chieftain’s robber life!—
 Winning mean prey by causeless strife,
 Wrenching from ruin’d Lowland swain
 20 His herds and harvest reared in vain.—

Methinks a soul, like thine, should scorn
The spoils from such foul foray borne."

VII

- The Gael beheld him grim the while,
And answer'd with disdainful smile,—
"Saxon, from yonder mountain high,
I mark'd thee send delighted eye,
5 Far to the south and east, where lay,
Extended in succession gay,
Deep waving fields and pastures green,
With gentle slopes and groves between:—
These fertile plains, that soften'd vale,
10 Were once the birthright of the Gael;
The stranger came with iron hand,
And from our fathers reft the land.
Where dwell we now! See, rudely swell
Crag over crag, and fell o'er fell.
15 Ask we this savage hill we tread,
For fatten'd steer or household bread;
Ask we for flocks these shingles dry,
And well the mountain might reply,—
'To you, as to your sires of yore,
20 Belong the target and claymore!
I give you shelter in my breast,
Your own good blades must win the rest.'
Pent in this fortress of the North,
Think'st thou we will not sally forth,
25 To spoil the spoiler as we may,
And from the robber rend the prey?
Ay, by my soul!—While on yon plain
The Saxon rears one shock of grain;
While, of ten thousand herds, there strays
30 But one along yon river's maze,—
The Gael, of plain and river heir,
Shall, with strong hand, redeem his share.
Where live the mountain Chiefs who hold
That plundering Lowland field and fold

- 35 Is aught but retribution true?
 Seek other cause 'gainst Roderick Dhu."—

VIII

- Answer'd Fitz-James,—“And, if I sought,
 Think'st thou no other could be brought?
 What deem ye of my path waylaid?
 My life given o'er to ambuscade?”—
- 5 “As of a meed to rashness due:
 Hadst thou sent warning fair and true,—
 I seek my hound, or falcon stray'd,
 I seek, good faith, a Highland maid,—
 Free hadst thou been to come and go;
- 10 But secret path marks secret foe.
 Nor yet, for this, even as a spy,
 Hadst thou, unheard, been doom'd to die,
 Save to fulfil an augury.”—
 “Well, let it pass; nor will I now
- 15 Fresh cause of enmity avow,
 To chafe thy mood and cloud thy brow.
 Enough, I am by promise tied
 To match me with this man of pride:
 Twice have I sought Clan-Alpine's glen
- 20 In peace; but when I come agen,
 I come with banner, brand, and bow,
 As leader seeks his mortal foe.
 For love-lorn swain, in lady's bower,
 Ne'er panted for the appointed hour,
- 25 As I, until before me stand
 This rebel Chieftain and his band!”

IX

“Have, then, thy wish!”—He whistled shrill,
 And he was answer'd from the hill;
 Wild as the scream of the curlew,
 From crag to crag the signal flew.

- 5 Instant, through copse and heath, arose
 Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
 On right, on left, above, below,
 Sprung up at once the lurking foe;
 From shingles grey their lances start,
 10 The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
 The rushes and willow-wand
 Are bristling into axe and brand,
 And every tuft of broom gives life
 To plaided warrior arm'd for strife.
 15 That whistle garrison'd the glen
 At once with full five hundred men,
 As if the yawning hill to heaven
 A subterranean host had given.
 Watching their leader's beck and will,
 20 All silent there they stood, and still.
 Like the loose crags whose threatening mass
 Lay tottering o'er the hollow pass,
 As if an infant's touch could urge
 Their headlong passage down the verge,
 25 With step and weapon forward flung,
 Upon the mountain-side they hung.
 The Mountaineer cast glance of pride
 Along Benledi's living side,
 Then fix'd his eye and sable brow
 30 Full on Fitz-James—"How say'st thou now?
 These are Clan-Alpine's warriors true;
 And, Saxon,—I am Roderick Dhu!"

X

- Fitz-James was brave:—Though to his heart
 The life-blood thrill'd with sudden start,
 He mann'd himself with dauntless air,
 Return'd the Chief his haughty stare,
 5 His back against a rock he bore,
 And firmly placed his foot before:—
 "Come one, come all! this rock shall fly
 From its firm base as soon as I."

- Sir Roderick mark'd—and in his eyes
 10 Respect was mingled with surprise,
 And the stern joy which warriors feel
 In foemen worthy of their steel.
 Short space he stood—then waved his hand:
 Down sunk the disappearing band;
 15 Each warrior vanish'd where he stood,
 In broom or bracken, heath or wood;
 Sunk brand and spear and bended bow,
 In osiers pale and copses low;
 It seemed as if their mother Earth
 20 Had swallow'd up her warlike birth.
 The wind's last breath had toss'd in air,
 Pennon, and plaid, and plumage fair,—
 The next but swept a lone hill-side,
 Where heath and fern were waving wide:
 25 The sun's last glance was glinted back,
 From spear and glaive, from targe and jack,—
 The next, all unreflected, shone
 On bracken green, and cold grey stone.

XI

- Fitz-James look'd round—yet scarce believed
 The witness that his sight received;
 Such apparition well might seem
 Delusion of a dreadful dream.
 5 Sir Roderick in suspense he eyed,
 And to his look the Chief replied,
 “Fear nought—nay, that I need not say—
 But—doubt not aught from mine array.
 Thou art my guest;—I pledged my word
 10 As far as Coilantogle ford:
 Nor would I call a clansman's brand
 For aid against one valiant hand,
 Though on our strife lay every vale
 Rent by the Saxon from the Gael.
 15 So move we on;—I only meant
 To show the reed on which you leant,

- Deeming this path you might pursue
 Without a pass from Roderick Dhu."
 They moved:—I said Fitz-James was brave,
 20 As ever knight that belted glaive;
 Yet dare not say that now his blood
 Kept on its wont and temper'd flood,
 As, following Roderick's stride, he drew
 That seeming lonesome pathway through,
 25 Which yet, by fearful proof, was rife
 With lances, that, to take his life,
 Waited but signal from a guide
 So late dishonour'd and defied.
 Ever, by stealth, his eye sought round
 30 The vanish'd guardians of the ground,
 And still, from copse and heather deep,
 Fancy saw spear and broadsword peep,
 And in the plover's shrilly strain,
 The signal whistle heard again.
 35 Nor breathed he free till far behind
 The pass was left; for then they wind
 Along a wide and level green,
 Where neither tree nor tuft was seen,
 Nor rush nor bush of broom was near,
 40 To hide a bonnet or a spear.

XII

- The Chief in silence strode before,
 And reached that torrent's sounding shore,
 Which, daughter of three mighty lakes,
 From Vennachar in silver breaks,
 5 Sweeps through the plain, and ceaseless mines
 On Bochastle the mouldering lines,
 Where Rome, the Empress of the world,
 Of yore her eagle wings unfurl'd.
 And here his course the Chieftain staid,
 10 Threw down his target and his plaid,
 And to the Lowland warrior said—

- "Bold Saxon! to his promise just,
 Vich-Alpine has discharged his trust.
 This murderous Chief, this ruthless man,
 15 This head of a rebellious clan,
 Hath led thee safe, through watch and ward,
 Far past Clan-Alpine's outmost guard.
 Now, man to man, and steel to steel,
 A Chieftain's vengeance thou shalt feel.
 20 See, here, all vantageless I stand,
 Arm'd, like thyself, with single brand:
 For this is Coilantogle ford,
 And thou must keep thee with thy sword."

XIII

- The Saxon paused:—"I ne'er delay'd,
 When foeman bade me draw my blade;
 Nay more, brave Chief, I vow'd thy death:
 Yet sure thy fair and generous faith,
 5 And my deep debt for life preserved,
 A better meed have well deserved:
 Can nought but blood our feud atone?
 Are there no means?"—"No, Stranger, none!
 And hear,—to fire thy flagging zeal,—
 10 The Saxon cause rests on thy steel;
 For thus spoke Fate, by prophet bred
 Between the living and the dead;
 'Who spills the foremost foeman's life,
 His party conquers in the strife.'"
 15 "Then, by my word," the Saxon said,
 "The riddle is already read.
 Seek yonder brake beneath the cliff,—
 There lies Red Murdoch, stark and stiff.
 Thus Fate has solved her prophecy;
 20 Then yield to Fate, and not to me.
 To James, at Stirling, let us go,
 When, if thou wilt be still his foe,
 Or if the King shall not agree
 To grant thee grace and favour free,

- 25 I plight mine honour, oath, and word,
 That, to thy native strengths restored,
 With each advantage shalt thou stand,
 That aids thee now to guard thy land."

XIV

- Dark lightning flash'd from Roderick's eye—
 "Soars thy presumption, then, so high,
 Because a wretched kern ye slew,
 Homage to name to Roderick Dhu?
 5 He yields not, he, to man nor Fate!
 Thou add'st but fuel to my hate:—
 My clansman's blood demands revenge.
 Not yet prepared?—By heaven, I change
 My thought, and hold thy valour light
 10 As that of some vain carpet knight,
 Who ill deserved my courteous care,
 And whose best boast is but to wear
 A braid of his fair lady's hair."—
 "I thank thee, Roderick, for the word
 15 It nerves my heart, it steels my sword
 For I have sworn this braid to stain
 In the best blood that warms thy vein.
 Now, truce, farewell! and, ruth, begone!—
 Yet think not that by thee alone,
 20 Proud Chief! can courtesy be shown;
 Though not from copse, or heath, or cairn,
 Start at my whistle clansmen stern,
 Of this small horn one feeble blast
 Would fearful odds against thee cast.
 25 But fear not—doubt not—which thou wilt—
 We try this quarrel hilt to hilt."—
 Then each at once his falchion drew,
 Each on the ground his scabbard threw,
 Each look'd to sun, and stream, and plain,
 30 As what they ne'er might see again;
 Then foot, and point, and eye opposed,
 In dubious strife they darkly closed.

XV

- Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu,
 That on the field his targe he threw,
 Whose brazen studs and tough bull-hide
 Had death so often dash'd aside;
 5 For, train'd abroad his arms to wield,
 Fitz-James's blade was sword and shield.
 He practised every pass and ward,
 To thrust, to strike, to feint, to guard;
 While less expert, though stronger far,
 10 'The Gael maintain'd unequal war.
 Three times in closing strife they stood,
 And thrice the Saxon blade drank blood;
 No stinted draught, no scanty tide,
 The gushing flood the tartans dyed.
 15 Fierce Roderick felt the fatal drain,
 And shower'd his blows like wintry rain;
 And, as firm rock, or castle-roof,
 Against the winter shower is proof,
 The foe, invulnerable still,
 20 Foil'd his wild rage by steady skill;
 'Till, at advantage ta'en, his brand
 Forced Roderick's weapon from his hand,
 And backward borne upon the lea,
 Brought the proud Chieftain to his knee.

XVI

- "Now, yield thee, or by Him who made
 The world, thy heart's blood dyes my blade!"—
 "Thy threats, thy mercy, I defy!
 Let recreant yield, who fears to die."
 5 —Like adder darting from his coil,
 Like wolf that dashes through the toil,
 Like mountain-cat who guards her young,
 Full at Fitz-James's throat he sprung;
 Received, but reck'd not of a wound,
 10 And lock'd his arms his foeman round.—

- Now, gallant Saxon, hold thine own!
No maiden's hand is round thee thrown!
That desperate grasp thy frame might feel,
Through bars of brass and triple steel!—
15 They tug, they strain! down, down they go,
The Gael above, Fitz-James below.
The Chieftain's gripe his throat compress'd,
His knee was planted in his breast;
His clotted locks he backward threw,
20 Across his brow his hand he drew,
From blood and mist to clear his sight,
Then gleam'd aloft his dagger bright!—
—But hate and fury ill supplied
The stream of life's exhausted tide,
25 And all too late the advantage came,
To turn the odds of deadly game;
For, while the dagger gleam'd on high,
Reel'd soul and sense, reel'd brain and eye.
Down came the blow! but in the heath
30 The erring blade found bloodless sheath.
The struggling foe may now unclasp
The fainting Chief's relaxing grasp;
Unwounded from the dreadful close,
But breathless all, Fitz-James arose.

XVII

- He falter'd thanks to Heaven for life,
Redeem'd, unhoped, from desperate strife;
Next on his foe his look he cast,
Whose every gasp appear'd his last;
5 In Roderick's gore he dipped the braid,—
“Poor Blanche! thy wrongs are dearly paid:
Yet with thy foe must die, or live,
The praise that faith and valour give.”
With that he blew a bugle-note,
10 Undid the collar from his throat,
Unbonneted, and by the wave
Sate down his brow and hands to lave.

- Then faint afar are heard the feet
 Of rushing steeds in gallop fleet;
 15 The sounds increase, and now are seen
 Four mounted squires in Lincoln green;
 Two who bear lance, and two who lead,
 By loosen'd rein, a saddled steed;
 Each onward held his headlong course,
 20 And by Fitz-James rein'd up his horse,—
 With wonder view'd the bloody spot—
 —“Exclaim not, gallants! question not.—
 You, Herbert and Luffness, alight,
 And bind the wounds of yonder knight;
 25 Let the grey palfrey bear his weight,
 We destined for a fairer freight,
 And bring him on to Stirling straight;
 I will before at better speed,
 To seek fresh horse and fitting weed.
 30 The sun rides high;—I must be boune,
 To see the archer-game at noon;
 But lightly Bayard clears the lea.—
 De Vaux and Herries, follow me.

XVIII

- “Stand, Bayard, stand!”—the steed obey'd,
 With arching neck and bended head,
 And glancing eye and quivering ear,
 As if he loved his lord to hear.
 5 No foot Fitz-James in stirrup staid,
 No grasp upon the saddle laid,
 But wreath'd his left hand in the mane,
 And lightly bounded from the plain,
 Turn'd on the horse his armed heel,
 10 And stirr'd his courage with the steel.
 Bounded the fiery steed in air,
 The rider sate erect and fair,
 Then like a bolt from steel crossbow
 Forth launch'd, along the plain they go.

- 15 They dash'd that rapid torrent through,
 And up Carhonie's hill they flew;
 Still at the gallop prick'd the Knight,
 His merry-men follow'd as they might.
 Along thy banks, swift Teith! they ride,
 20 And in the race they mock thy tide;
 Torry and Lendrick now are past,
 And Deanstown lies behind them cast;
 They rise, the banner'd towers of Doune,
 They sink in distant woodland soon;
 25 Blair-Drummond sees the hoofs strike fire,
 They sweep like breeze through Ochertyre;
 They mark just glance and disappear
 The lofty brow of ancient Kier;
 They bathe their courser's sweltering sides,
 30 Dark Forth! amid thy sluggish tides,
 And on the opposing shore take ground,
 With splash, with scramble, and with bound.
 Right-hand they leave thy cliffs, Craig-Forth!
 And soon the bulwark of the North,
 35 Grey Stirling, with her towers and town,
 Upon their fleet career look'd down.

XIX

- As up the flinty path they strain'd,
 Sudden his steed the leader rein'd;
 A signal to his squire he flung,
 Who instant to his stirrup sprung:—
 5 "Seest thou, De Vaux, yon woodsman grey,
 Who town-ward holds the rocky way,
 Of stature tall and poor array?
 Mark'st thou the firm, yet active stride,
 With which he scales the mountain-side?
 10 Know'st thou from whence he comes, or whom?"
 "No, by my word;—a burly groom
 He seems, who in the field or chase
 A baron's train would nobly grace."—

- "Out, out, De Vaux! can fear supply.
 15 And jealousy, no sharper eye?
 Afar, ere to the hill he drew,
 That stately form and step I knew;
 Like form in Scotland is not seen,
 Treads not such step on Scottish green.
 20 'T is James of Douglas, by Saint Serle!
 The uncle of the banish'd Earl.
 Away, away, to court, to show
 The near approach of dreaded foe:
 The King must stand upon his guard;
 25 Douglas and he must meet prepared."
 Then right-hand wheel'd their steeds, and straight
 They won the castle's postern gate.

XX

- The Douglas, who had bent his way
 From Cambus-Kenneth's abbey grey,
 Now, as he climb'd the rocky shelf,
 Held sad communion with himself:—
 5 "Yes! all is true my fears could frame;
 A prisoner lies the noble Græme,
 And fiery Roderick soon will feel
 The vengeance of the royal steel.
 I, only I, can ward their fate,—
 10 God grant the ransom come not late!
 The Abbess hath her promise given,
 My child shall be the bride of heaven;—
 —Be pardon'd one repining tear!
 For He, who gave her, knows how dear,
 15 How excellent!—but that is by,
 And now my business is—to die.
 Ye towers! within whose circuit dread
 A Douglas by his sovereign bled;
 And thou, O sad and fatal mound!
 20 That oft has heard the death-axe sound,
 As on the noblest of the land
 Fell the stern headsman's bloody hand,—

- The dungeon, block, and nameless tomb
 Prepare—for Douglas seeks his doom!
 25 —But hark! what blithe and jolly peal
 Makes the Franciscan steeple reel?
 And see! upon the crowded street,
 In motley groups what masquers meet!
 Banner and pageant, pipe and drum,
 30 And merry morrice-dancers come.
 I guess, by all this quaint array,
 The burghers hold their sports to-day.
 James will be there; he loves such show,
 Where the good yeoman bends his bow,
 35 And the tough wrestler foils his foe,
 As well as where, in proud career,
 The high-born tilter shivers spear.
 I'll follow to the Castle-park,
 And play my prize;—King James shall mark,
 40 If age has tamed these sinews stark,
 Whose force so oft, in happier days,
 His boyish wonder loved to praise.”

XXI

- The Castle gates were open flung,
 The quivering drawbridge rock'd and rung,
 And echo'd loud the flinty street
 Beneath the coursers' clattering feet,
 5 As slowly down the steep descent
 Fair Scotland's King and nobles went.
 While all along the crowded way
 Was jubilee and loud huzza,
 And ever James was bending low,
 10 To his white jennet's saddle-bow,
 Doffing his cap to city dame,
 Who smiled and blush'd for pride and shame.
 And well the simperer might be vain,—
 He chose the fairest of the train.
 15 Gravely he greets each city sire,
 Commends each pageant's quaint attire,

- Gives to the dancers thanks aloud,
 And smiles and nods upon the crowd,
 Who rend the heavens with their acclaims,
 20 "Long live the Commons' King, King James!"
 Behind the King throng'd peer and knight,
 And noble dame and damsel bright,
 Whose fiery steeds ill brook'd the stay
 Of the steep street and crowded way.
 25 —But in the train you might discern
 Dark lowering brow and visage stern;
 There nobles mourn'd their pride restrain'd,
 And the mean burgher's joys disdain'd;
 And chiefs, who, hostage for their clan,
 30 Were each from home a banish'd man,
 There thought upon their own grey tower,
 Their waving woods, their feudal power,
 And deem'd themselves a shameful part
 Of pageant which they cursed in heart.

XXII

- Now, in the Castle-park, drew out
 Their chequer'd bands the joyous rout.
 There morricers, with bell at heel,
 And blade in hand, their mazes wheel;
 5 But chief, beside the butts, there stand
 Bold Robin Hood and all his band,—
 Friar Tuck with quarterstaff and cowl,
 Old Scathelocke with his surly scowl,
 Maid Marion, fair as ivory bone,
 10 Scarlet, and Mutch, and Little John;
 Their bugles challenge all that will,
 In archery to prove their skill.
 The Douglas bent a bow of might,—
 His first shaft centred in the white,
 15 And when in turn he shot again,
 His second split the first in twain.
 From the King's hand must Douglas take
 A silver dart, the archer's stake;

Fondly he watch'd, with watery eye,
 20 Some answering glance of sympathy,—
 No kind emotion made reply!
 Indifferent as to archer wight,
 The monarch gave the arrow bright.

XXIII

Now, clear the ring! for, hand to hand,
 The manly wrestlers take their stand.
 Two o'er the rest superior rose,
 And proud demanded mightier foes,
 5 Nor call'd in vain; for Douglas came.
 —For life is Hugh of Larbert lame;
 Scarce better John of Allōa's fare,
 Whom senseless home his comrades bear.
 Prize of the wrestling match, the King
 10 To Douglas gave a golden ring,
 While coldly glanced his eye of blue,
 As frozen drop of wintry dew.
 Douglas would speak, but in his breast
 His struggling soul his words suppress'd;
 15 Indignant than he turn'd him where
 Their arms the brawny yeomen bare,
 To hurl the massive bar in air.
 When each his utmost strength had shown,
 The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone
 20 From its deep bed, then heav'd it high,
 And sent the fragment through the sky,
 A rood beyond the farthest mark;—
 And still in Stirling's royal park,
 The grey-hair'd sires, who know the past,
 25 To strangers point the Douglas-cast,
 And moralize on the decay
 Of Scottish strength in modern day.

XXIV

The vale with loud applauses rang,
 The Ladies' Rock sent back the clang.

- The King, with look unmoved, bestow'd
A purse well-fill'd with pieces broad.
- 5 Indignant smiled the Douglas proud,
And threw the gold among the crowd,
Who now, with anxious wonder, scan,
And sharper glance, the dark grey man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
- 10 That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas blood belong,
The old men mark'd and shook the head,
To see his hair with silver spread,
And wink'd aside, and told each son,
- 15 Of feats upon the English done,
Ere Douglas of the stalwart hand
Was exiled from his native land.
The women praised his stately form,
Though wreck'd by many a winter's storm:
- 20 The youth with awe and wonder saw
His strength surpassing Nature's law.
Thus judged, as is their wont, the crowd,
Till murmur rose to clamours loud.
But not a glance from that proud ring
- 25 Of peers who circled round the King
With Douglas held communion kind,
Or call'd the banish'd man to mind;
No, not from those who, at the chase,
Once held his side the honour'd place,
- 30 Begirt his board, and, in the field,
Found safety underneath his shield;
For he whom royal eyes disown
When was his form to courtiers known!

XXV

The Monarch saw the gambols flag,
And bade let loose a gallant stag,
Whose pride, the holiday to crown,
Two favourite greyhounds should pull down,

- 5 That venison free, and Bordeaux wine,
Might serve the archery to dine.
But Lufra,—whom from Douglas' side
Nor bribe nor threat could e'er divide,
The fleetest hound in all the North,—
10 Brave Lufra saw, and darted forth.
She left the royal hounds mid-way,
And dashing on the antler'd prey,
Sunk her sharp muzzle in his flank,
And deep the flowing life-blood drank.
15 The King's stout huntsman saw the sport
By strange intruder broken short,
Came up, and with his leash unbound,
In anger struck the noble hound.
—The Douglas had endured, that morn,
20 The King's cold look, the nobles' scorn,
And last, and worst to spirit proud,
Had borne the pity of the crowd;
But Lufra had been fondly bred,
To share his board, to watch his bed,
25 And oft would Ellen Lufra's neck
In maiden glee with garlands deck;
They were such playmates, that with name
Of Lufra, Ellen's image came.
His stifled wrath is brimming high,
30 In darken'd brow and flashing eye;
As waves before the bark divide,
The crowd gave way before his stride;
Needs but a buffet and no more,
The groom lies senseless in his gore.
35 Such blow no other hand could deal,
Though gauntleted in glove of steel.

XXVI

Then clamour'd loud the royal train,
And brandish'd swords and staves amain,
But stern the Baron's warning—"Back!
Back, on your lives, ye menial pack!

- 5 Beware the Douglas.—Yes! behold,
 King James! the Douglas, doom'd of old,
 And vainly sought for near and far,
 A victim to atone the war,
 A willing victim, now attends,
 10 Nor craves thy grace but for his friends.”—
 “Thus in my clemency repaid?
 Presumptuous Lord!” the monarch said;
 “Of thy mis-proud ambitious clan,
 Thou, James of Bothwell, wert the man,
 15 The only man, in whom a foe
 My woman-mercy would not know:
 But shall a Monarch's presence brook
 Injurious blow, and haughty look?—
 What ho! the Captain of our Guard!
 20 Give the offender fitting ward.—
 Break off the sports!”—for tumult rose,
 And yeomen 'gan to bend their bows,—
 “Break off the sports!” he said, and frown'd,
 “And bid our horsemen clear the ground.”

XXVII

- Then uproar wild and misarray
 Marr'd the fair form of festal day.
 The horsemen prick'd among the crowd,
 Repell'd by threats and insult loud;
 5 To earth are borne the old and weak,
 The timorous fly, the women shriek;
 With flint, with shaft, with staff, with bar,
 The hardier urge tumultuous war.
 At once round Douglas darkly sweep
 10 The royal spears in circle deep,
 And slowly scale the pathway steep;
 While on the rear in thunder pour
 The rabble with disorder'd roar.
 With grief the noble Douglas saw
 15 The Commons rise against the law,

And to the leading soldier said,—
 “Sir John of Hyndford! ’twas my blade,
 That knighthood on thy shoulder laid;
 For that good deed, permit me then
 20 A word with these misguided men.

XXVIII

“Hear, gentle friends! ere yet for me,
 Ye break the bands of fealty.
 My life, my honour, and my cause,
 I tender free to Scotland’s laws.
 5 Are these so weak as must require
 The aid of your misguided ire?
 Or, if I suffer causeless wrong,
 Is then my selfish rage so strong,
 My sense of public weal so low,
 10 That, for mean vengeance on a foe,
 Those cords of love I should unbind,
 Which knit my country and my kind?
 Oh no! Believe, in yonder tower
 It will not soothe my captive hour,
 15 To know those spears our foes should dread,
 For me in kindred gore are red;
 To know, in fruitless brawl begun,
 For me, that mother wails her son;
 For me, that widow’s mate expires;
 20 For me, that orphans weep their sires;
 That patriots mourn insulted laws,
 And curse the Douglas for the cause.
 O let your patience ward such ill,
 And keep your right to love me still!”

XXIX

The crowd’s wild fury sunk again
 In tears, as tempests melt in rain.
 With lifted hands and eyes, they pray’d
 For blessings on his generous head,

- 5 Who for his country felt alone,
And prized her blood beyond his own.
Old men, upon the verge of life,
Bless'd him who stay'd the civil strife;
And mothers held their babes on high,
10 The self-devoted Chief to spy,
Triumphant over wrongs and ire,
To whom the prattlers owed a sire:
Even the rough soldier's heart was moved;
As if behind some bier beloved,
15 With trailing arms and drooping head,
The Douglas up the hill he led,
And at the castle's battled verge,
With sighs resign'd his honour'd charge.

XXX

- The offended Monarch rode apart,
With bitter thought and swelling heart,
And would not now vouchsafe again
Through Stirling streets to lead his train.
5 "O Lennox, who would wish to rule
This changeling crowd, this common fool?
Hear'st thou," he said, "the loud acclaim,
With which they shout the Douglas name?
With like acclaim, the vulgar throat
10 Strain'd for King James their morning note;
With like acclaim they hail'd the day
When first I broke the Douglas' sway;
And like acclaim would Douglas greet,
If he could hurl me from my seat.
15 Who o'er the herd would wish to reign,
Fantastic, fickle, fierce, and vain!
Vain as the leaf upon the stream,
And fickle as a changeful dream;
Fantastic as a woman's mood,
20 And fierce as Frenzy's fever'd blood.
Thou many-headed monster-thing,
O who could wish to be thy king!

XXXI

- “But soft! what messenger of speed
 Spurs hitherward his panting steed?
 I guess his cognizance afar—
 What from our cousin, John of Mar?”—
 5 “He prays, my liege, your sports keep bound
 Within the safe and guarded ground:
 For some foul purpose yet unknown,—
 Most sure for evil to the throne,—
 The outlaw’d Chieftain, Roderick Dhu,
 10 Has summon’d his rebellious crew;
 ’Tis said, in James of Bothwell’s aid
 These loose banditti stand array’d.
 The Earl of Mar, this morn, from Doune,
 To break their muster march’d, and soon
 15 Your grace will hear of battle fought;
 But earnestly the Earl besought,
 Till for such danger he provide,
 With scanty train you will not ride.”

XXXII

- “Thou warn’st me I have done amiss,—
 I should have earlier look’d to this:
 I lost it in this bustling day.
 —Retrace with speed thy former way;
 5 Spare not for spoiling of thy steed,
 The best of mine shall be thy meed.
 Say to our faithful Lord of Mar,
 We do forbid the intended war:
 Roderick, this morning, in single fight,
 10 Was made our prisoner by a knight;
 And Douglas hath himself and cause
 Submitted to our kingdom’s laws.
 The tidings of their leaders lost
 Will soon dissolve the mountain host,
 15 Nor would we that the vulgar feel,
 For their Chief’s crimes, avenging steel.

- Bear Mar our message, Braco; fly!"—
 He turn'd his steed,—“My liege, I hie,—
 Yet, ere I cross this lily lawn,
 20 I fear the broadswords will be drawn.”
 The turf the flying courser spurn'd,
 And to his towers the King return'd.

XXXIII

- Ill with King James's mood that day,
 Suited gay feast and minstrel lay;
 Soon were dismiss'd the courtly throng,
 And soon cut short the festal song.
 5 Nor less upon the sadden'd town
 The evening sunk in sorrow down.
 The burghers spoke of civil jar,
 Of runour'd feuds and mountain war,
 Of Moray, Mar, and Roderick Dhu,
 10 All up in arms:—the Douglas too,
 They mourn'd him pent within the hold,
 “Where stout Earl William was of old.”
 And there his word the speaker staid,
 And finger on his lip he laid,
 15 Or pointed to his dagger blade.
 But jaded horsemen, from the west,
 At evening to the Castle press'd;
 And busy talkers said they bore
 Tidings of fight on Katrine's shore;
 20 At noon the deadly fray begun,
 And lasted till the set of sun.
 Thus giddy rumour shook the town,
 Till closed the Night her pennons brown.

CANTO SIXTH

The Guard-Room

I

- THE sun, awakening, through the smoky air
 Of the dark city casts a sullen glance,
 Rousing each caitiff to his task of care,
 Of sinful man the sad inheritance;
 5 Summoning revellers from the lagging dance,
 Scaring the prowling robber to his den;
 Gilding on battled tower the warder's lance,
 And warning student pale to leave his pen,
 And yield his drowsy eyes to the kind nurse of men.
- 10 What various scenes, and, O! what scenes of woe,
 Are witness'd by that red and struggling beam!
 The fever'd patient, from his pallet low,
 Through crowded hospital beholds its stream;
 The ruin'd maiden trembles at its gleam,
 15 The debtor wakes to thought of gyve and jail,
 The love-lorn wretch starts from tormenting dream;
 The wakeful mother, by the glimmering pale,
 Trins her sick infant's couch, and soothes his
 feeble wail.

II

- At dawn the towers of Stirling rang
 With soldier-step and weapon-clang,
 While drums, with rolling note, foretell
 Relief to weary sentinel.
- 5 Through narrow loop and casement barr'd,
 The sunbeams sought the Court of Guard,
 And, struggling with the smoky air,
 Deadened the torches' yellow glare.

- In comfortless alliance shone
 10 The lights through arch of blacken'd stone,
 And show'd wild shapes in garb of war,
 Faces deform'd with beard and scar,
 All haggard from the midnight watch,
 And fever'd with the stern debauch;
 15 For the oak table's massive board,
 Flooded with wine, with fragments stored,
 And beakers drain'd, and cups o'erthrown,
 Show'd in what sport the night had flown.
 Some, weary, snored on floor and bench;
 20 Some labour'd still their thirst to quench;
 Some, chill'd with watching, spread their hands
 O'er the huge chimney's dying brands,
 While round them, or beside them flung,
 At every step their harness rung.

III

- These drew not for their fields the sword,
 Like tenants of a feudal lord,
 Nor own'd the patriarchal claim
 Of Chieftain in their leader's name;
 5 Adventurers they, from far who roved,
 To live by battle which they loved.
 There the Italian's clouded face,
 The swarthy Spaniard's there you trace;
 The mountain-loving Switzer there
 10 More freely breathed in mountain-air;
 The Fleming there despised the soil,
 That paid so ill the labourer's toil;
 Their rolls show'd French and German name;
 And merry England's exiles came,
 15 To share, with ill-conceal'd disdain,
 Of Scotland's pay the scanty gain.
 All brave in arms, well train'd to wield
 The heavy halberd, brand, and shield;
 In camps licentious, wild, and bold;
 20 In pillage fierce and uncontroll'd;

And now, by holytide and feast,
From rules of discipline released.

IV

- They held debate of bloody fray,
Fought 'twixt Loch Katrine and Achray.
Fierce was their speech, and, 'mid their words,
Their hands oft grappled to their swords;
5 Nor sunk their tone to spare the ear
Of wounded comrades groaning near,
Whose mangled limbs, and bodies gored,
Bore token of the mountain sword,
Though, neighbouring to the Court of Guard,
10 Their prayers and feverish wails were heard;
Sad burden to the ruffian joke,
And savage oath by fury spoke!—
At length up-started John of Brent,
A yeoman from the banks of Trent;
15 A stranger to respect or fear,
In peace a chaser of the deer,
In host a hardy mutineer,
But still the boldest of the crew,
When deed of danger was to do.
20 He grieved, that day, their games cut short,
And marr'd the dicer's brawling sport,
And shouted loud, "Renew the bowl!
And, while a merry catch I troll,
Let each the buxom chorus bear,
25 Like brethren of the brand and spear."

V

Soldier's Song

Our vicar still preaches that Peter and Poule
Laid a swinging long curse on the bonny brown bowl,
That there's wrath and despair in the jolly blackjack,
And the seven deadly sins in a flagon of sack;

- 5 Yet whoop, Barnaby! off with thy liquor,
 Drink upsecs out, and a fig for the vicar!

Our vicar he calls it damnation to sip
 The ripe ruddy dew of a woman's dear lip,
 Says; that Beelzebub lurks in her kerchief so sly,
 10 And Apollyon shoots darts from her merry black eye;
 Yet whoop, Jack! kiss Gillian the quicker,
 Till she bloom like a rose, and a fig for the vicar!

- Our vicar thus preaches—and why should he not?
 For the dues of his cure are the placket and pot;
 15 And 't is right of his office poor laymen to lurch,
 Who infringe the domains of our good Mother Church.
 Yet whoop, bully-boys! off with your liquor,
 Sweet Marjorie's the word, and a fig for the vicar!

VI

- The warder's challenge, heard without,
 Staid in mid-roar the merry shout.
 A soldier to the portal went,—
 "Here is old Bertram, sirs, of Ghent;
 5 And,—beat for jubilee the drum!
 A maid and minstrel with him come."
 Bertram, a Fleming, grey and scarr'd,
 Was entering now the Court of Guard,
 A harper with him, and in plaid
 10 All muffled close, a mountain maid,
 Who backward shrunk, to 'scape the view
 Of the loose scene and boisterous crew.
 "What news?" they roar'd:—"I only know,
 From noon till eve we fought with foe,
 15 As wild and as untameable
 As the rude mountains where they dwell;
 On both sides store of blood is lost,
 Nor much success can either boast."—
 "But whence thy captives, friend? such spoil
 20 As their must needs reward thy toil.

Old dost thou wax, and wars grow sharp;
 Thou now hast glee-maiden and harp!
 Get thee an ape, and trudge the land,
 The leader of a juggler band.”—

VII

- “No, comrade;—no such fortune mine.
 After the fight these sought our line,
 That aged harper and the girl,
 And, having audience of the Earl,
 5 Mar bade I should purvey them steed,
 And bring them hitherward with speed.
 Forbear your mirth and rude alarm,
 For none shall do them shame or harm.”—
 “Hear ye his boast?” cried John of Brent,
 10 Ever to strife and jangling bent;
 “Shall he strike doe beside our lodge,
 And yet the jealous niggard grudge
 To pay the forester his fee?
 I’ll have my share, howe’er it be,
 15 Despite of Moray, Mar, or thee.”
 Bertram his forward step withstood;
 And, burning in his vengeful mood,
 Old Allan, though unfit for strife,
 Laid hand upon his dagger-knife;
 20 But Ellen boldly stepp’d between,
 And dropp’d at once the tartan screen:—
 So, from his morning cloud, appears
 The sun of May, through summer tears.
 The savage soldiery, amazed,
 25 As on descended angel gazed;
 Even hardy Brent, abash’d and tamed,
 Stood half admiring, half ashamed.

VIII

Boldly she spoke,—“Soldiers, attend!
 My father was the soldier’s friend;

- Cheer'd him in camps, in marches led,
 And with him in the battle bled.
- 5 Not from the valiant, or the strong,
 Should exile's daughter suffer wrong."—
 Answer'd De Brent, most forward still
 In every feat or good or ill,—
 "I shame me of the part I play'd:
- 10 And thou an outlaw's child, poor maid!
 An outlaw I by forest laws,
 And merry Needwood knows the cause.
 Poor Rose,—if Rose be living now,"—
 He wiped his iron eye and brow,—
- 15 "Must bear such age, I think, as thou.
 Hear ye, my mates;—I go to call
 The Captain of our watch to hall:
 There lies my halberd on the floor;
 And he that steps my halberd o'er,
- 20 To do the maid injurious part,
 My shaft shall quiver in his heart!—
 Beware loose speech, or jesting rough:
 Ye all know John de Brent. Enough."

IX

- Their Captain came, a gallant young,—
 (Of Tullibardine's house he sprung,)
 Nor wore he yet the spurs of knight;
 Gay was his mien, his humour light,
- 5 And, though by courtesy controll'd,
 Forward his speech, his bearing bold.
 The high-born maiden ill could brook
 The scanning of his curious look
 And dauntless eye;—and yet, in sooth,
- 10 Young Lewis was a generous youth;
 But Ellen's lovely face and mien,
 Ill suited to the garb and scene,
 Might lightly bear construction strange,
 And give loose fancy scope to range.

- 15 "Welcome to Stirling towers, fair maid!
 Come ye to seek a champion's aid,
 On palfrey white, with harper hoar,
 Like errant damosel of yore?
 Does thy high quest a knight require,
 20 Or may the venture suit a squire?"—
 Her dark eye flash'd;—she paused and sigh'd,—
 "O what have I to do with pride!—
 —Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife,
 A suppliant for a father's life,
 25 I crave an audience of the King.
 Behold, to back my suit, a ring,
 The royal pledge of greatful claims,
 Given by the Monarch to Fitz-James."

X

- The signet-ring young Lewis took,
 With deep respect and alter'd look;
 And said,—“This ring our duties own;
 And pardon, if to worth unknown,
 5 In semblance mean obscurely veil'd,
 Lady, in aught my folly fail'd.
 Soon as the day flings wide his gates,
 The King shall know what suitor waits.
 Please you, meanwhile, in fitting bower
 10 Repose you till his waking hour;
 Female attendance shall obey
 Your hest, for service or array.
 Permit I marshal you the way.”
 But, ere she followed, with the grace
 15 And open bounty of her race,
 She bade her slender purse be shared
 Among the soldiers of the guard.
 The rest with thanks their guerdon took;
 But Brent, with shy and awkward look,
 20 On the reluctant maiden's hold
 Forced bluntly back the proffer'd gold;—

- “Forgive a haughty English heart,
 And O forget its ruder part!
 The vacant purse shall be my share,
 25 Which in my barret-cap I’ll bear,
 Perchance, in jeopardy of war,
 Where gayer crests may keep afar.”
 With thanks,—’t was all she could—the maid
 His rugged courtesy repaid.

XI

- When Ellen forth with Lewis went,
 Allan made suit to John of Brent:—
 “My lady safe, O let your grace
 Give me to see my master’s face!
 5 His minstrel I,—to share his doom
 Bound from the cradle to the tomb,
 Tenth in descent, since first my sires
 Waked for his noble house their lyres,
 Nor one of all the race was known
 10 But prized its weal above their own.
 With the Chief’s birth begins our care;
 Our harp must soothe the infant heir,
 Teach the youth tales of fight, and grace
 His earliest feat of field or chase;
 15 In peace, in war, our rank we keep,
 We cheer his board, we soothe his sleep,
 Nor leave him till we pour our verse,—
 A doleful tribute!—o’er his hearse.
 Then let me share his captive lot;
 20 It is my right—deny it not!”—
 “Little we reckon,” said John of Brent,
 “We Southern men, of long descent;
 Nor wot we how a name—a word—
 Makes clansmen vassals to a lord:
 25 Yet kind my noble landlord’s part,—
 God bless the house of Beaudesert!

- And, but I loved to drive the deer,
 More than to guide the labouring steer,
 I had not dwelt an outcast here
 30 Come, good old Minstrel, follow me;
 Thy Lord and Chieftain shalt thou see."

XII

- Then, from a rusted iron hook,
 A bunch of ponderous keys he took,
 Lighted a torch, and Allan led
 Through grated arch and passage dread.
 5 Portals they pass'd, where, deep within,
 Spoke prisoner's moan, and fetters' din;
 Through rugged vaults, where, loosely stored,
 Lay wheel, and axe, and headsman's sword,
 And many an hideous engine grim,
 10 For wrenching joint, and crushing limb,
 By artist form'd, who deem'd it shame
 And sin to give their work a name.
 They halted at a low brow'd porch,
 And Brent to Allan gave the torch,
 15 While bolt and chain he backward roll'd,
 And made the bar unhasp its hold.
 They enter'd:—'twas a prison-room
 Of stern security and gloom,
 Yet not a dungeon; for the day
 20 Through lofty gratings found its way,
 And rude and antique garniture
 Deck'd the sad walls and oaken floor;
 Such as the rugged days of old
 Deem'd fit for captive noble's hold.
 25 "Here," said De Brent, "thou mayst remain
 Till the Leech visit him again,
 Strict is his charge, the warders tell,
 To tend the noble prisoner well."
 Retiring then the bolt he drew,
 30 And the lock's murmurs growl'd anew.

Roused at the sound, from lowly bed
 A captive feebly raised his head;
 'The wondering Minstrel look'd and knew—
 Not his dear lord, but Roderick Dhu!
 35 For, come from where Clan-Alpine fought,
 They, erring, deem'd the Chief he sought.

XIII

As the tall snip, whose lofty prore
 Shall never stem the billows more,
 Deserted by her gallant band,
 Amid the breakers lies astrand,—
 5 So, on his couch, lay Roderick Dhu!
 And oft his fever'd limbs he threw
 In toss abrupt, as when her sides
 Lie rocking in the advancing tides,
 That shake her frame with ceaseless beat,
 10 Yet cannot heave her from her seat:—
 O! how unlike her course at sea!
 Or his free step on hill and lea!—
 Soon as the Minstrel he could scan,
 —“What of thy lady?—of my clan?—
 15 My mother?—Douglas?—tell me all?
 Have they been ruin'd in my fall?
 Ah, yes! or wherefore art thou here
 Yet speak,—speak boldly,—do not fear.”—
 (For Allan, who his mood well knew,
 20 Was choked with grief and terror too.)
 “Who fought—who fled?—Old man, be brief;—
 Some might—for they had lost their Chief.
 Who basely live?—who bravely died?”
 “O, calm thee, Chief!” the Minstrel cried,
 25 “Ellen is safe;”—“For that thank Heaven!”—
 “And hopes are for the Douglas given;—
 The Lady Margaret too is well;
 And, for thy clan,—on field or fell,
 Has never harp of minstrel told,
 30 Of combat fought so true and bold.

Thy stately Pine is yet unbent,
Though many a goodly bough is rent."

XIV

- The Chieftain rear'd his form on high,
And fever's fire was in his eye;
But ghastly, pale, and livid streaks
Chequer'd his swarthy brow and cheeks.
5 —"Hark, Minstrel! I have heard thee play,
With measure bold, on festal day,
In yon lone isle, . . . again where ne'er
Shall harper play, or warrior hear! . . .
That stirring air that peals on high,
10 O'er Dermid's race our victory.—
Strike it!—and then, for well thou canst,
Free from thy minstrel spirit glanced,
Fling me the picture of the fight,
When met my clan the Saxon might.
15 I'll listen, till my fancy hears
The clang of swords, the crash of spears!
These grates, these walls, shall vanish then,
For the fair field of fighting men,
And my free spirit burst away,
20 As if it soar'd from battle fray."
The trembling Bard with awe obey'd,—
Slow on the harp his hand he laid;
But soon remembrance of the sight
He witness'd from the mountain's height
25 With what old Bertram told at night,
Awaken'd the full power of song,
And bore him in career along;—
As shallop launch'd on river's tide,
That slow and fearful leaves the side,
30 But, when it feels the middle stream,
Drives downward swift as lightning's beam.

XV

Battle of Bral' an Buir

- "The Minstrel came once more to view
 The eastern ridge of Benvenue,
 For ere he parted, he would say
 Farewell to lovely Loch Achray—
 5 Where shall he find, in foreign land,
 So lone a lake, so sweet a strand!
 There is no breeze upon the fern,
 No ripple on the lake,
 Upon her cyry nods the erne,
 10 The deer has sought the brake;
 The small birds will not sing aloud,
 The springing trout lies still,
 So darkly glooms yon thunder cloud,
 That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
 15 Benledi's distant hill.
 Is it the thunder's solemn sound
 That mutters deep and dread,
 Or echoes from the groaning ground
 The warrior's measured tread?
 20 Is it the lightning's quivering glance
 That on the thicket streams,
 Or do they flash on spear and lance
 The sun's retiring beams?
 —I see the dagger-crest of Mar,
 25 I see the Moray's silver star,
 Wave o'er the cloud of Saxon war,
 That up the lake comes winding far!
 To hero bound for battle-strife,
 Or bard of martial lay,
 30 'T were worth ten years of peaceful life,
 One glance at their array!

XVI

'Their light-arm'd archers far and near
 Survey'd the tangled ground,

- Their centre ranks, with pike and spear,
 A twilight forest frown'd,
 5 Their barbed horsemen, in the rear,
 The stern battalia crown'd.
 No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,
 Still were the pipe and drum;
 Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,
 10 The sullen march was dumb.
 There breathed no wind their crests to shake,
 Or wave their flags abroad;
 Scarce the frail aspen seem'd to quake,
 That shadow'd o'er their road.
 15 Their vaward scouts no tidings bring,
 Can rouse no lurking foe,
 Nor spy a trace of living thing,
 Save when they stirr'd the roe;
 The host moves, like a deep-sea wave,
 20 Where rise no rocks its pride to brave,
 High-swelling, dark, and slow.
 The lake is pass'd, and now they gain
 A narrow and a broken plain,
 Before the Trosachs' rugged jaws;
 25 And here the horse and spearmen pause,
 While, to explore the dangerous glen,
 Dive through the pass the archer-men.

XVII

- "At once there rose so wild a yell
 Within that dark and narrow dell,
 As all the fiends, from heaven that fell,
 Had peal'd the banner-cry of hell!
 5 Forth from the pass in tumult driven,
 Like chaff before the wind of heaven,
 The archery appear:
 For life! for life! their flight they ply—
 And shriek, and shout, and battle-cry,
 10 And plaids and bonnets waving high,
 And broadswords flashing to the sky,

- Are maddening in the rear.
 Onward they drive, in dreadful race,
 Pursuers and pursued;
 15 Before that tide of flight and chase,
 How shall it keep its rooted place,
 The spearmen's twilight wood?—
 'Down, down,' cried Mar, 'your lances down!
 Bear back both friend and foe!—'
 20 Like reeds before the tempest's frown,
 That serried grove of lances brown
 At once lay levell'd low;
 And closely shouldering side to side,
 The bristling ranks the onset bide.—
 25 'We'll quell the savage mountaineer,
 As their Tinchel cows the game!
 They come as fleet as forest deer,
 We'll drive them back as tame.'—

XVIII

- "Bearing before them, in their course,
 The relics of the archer force,
 Like wave with crest of sparkling foam,
 Right onward did Clan-Alpine come.
 5 Above the tide, each broadsword bright
 Was brandishing like beam of light,
 Each targe was dark below;
 And with the ocean's mighty swing,
 When heaving to the tempest's wing,
 10 They hurl'd them on the foe.
 I heard the lance's shivering crash,
 As when the whirlwind rends the ash;
 I heard the broadsword's deadly clang,
 As if an hundred anvils rang!
 15 But Moray wheel'd his rearward rank
 Of horsemen on Clan-Alpine's flank,
 —'My banner-man, advance!
 I see,' he cried, 'their column shake.—
 Now, gallants! for your ladies' sake,

- 20 Upon them with the lance!—
 The horsemen dash'd among the rout,
 As deer break through the broom;
 Their steeds are stout, their swords are out,
 They soon make lightsome room.
 25 Clan-Alpine's best are backward borne—
 Where, where was Roderick then!
 One blast upon his bugle-horn
 Were worth a thousand men.
 And reflux through the pass of fear
 30 The battle's tide was pour'd;
 Vanish'd the Saxon's struggling spear,
 Vanish'd the mountain-sword.
 As Bracklinn's chasm, so black and steep,
 Receives her roaring linn,
 35 As the dark caverns of the deep
 Suck the wild whirlpool in,
 So did the deep and darksome pass
 Devour the battle's mingled mass:
 None linger now upon the plain,
 40 Save those who ne'er shall fight again.

XIX

- “Now westward rolls the battle's din,
 That deep and doubling pass within,
 —Minstrel, away! the work of fate
 Is bearing on: its issue wait,
 5 Where the rude Trosachs' dread defile
 Opens on Katrine's lake and isle.—
 Grey Benvenue I soon repass'd,
 Loch Katrine lay beneath me cast.
 The sun is set;—the clouds are met,
 10 The lowering scowl of heaven
 An inky hue of livid blue
 To the deep lake has given;
 Strange gusts of wind from mountain-glen
 Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen.

- 15 I heeded not the eddying surge,
 Mine eye but saw the 'Trosachs' gorge,
 Mine ear but heard the sullen sound,
 Which like an earthquake shook the ground,
 And spoke the stern and desperate strife
 20 That parts not but with parting life,
 Seeming, to minstrel ear, to toll
 The dirge of many a passing soul.
 Nearer it comes—the dim-wood glen
 The martial flood disgorged agen,
 25 But not in mingled tide;
 The plaided warriors of the North
 High on the mountain thunder forth
 And overhang its side;
 While by the lake below appears
 30 The dark'ning cloud of Saxon spears.
 At weary bay each shatter'd band,
 Eyeing their foeman, sternly stand;
 Their banners stream like tatter'd sail,
 That flings its fragments to the gale,
 35 And broken arms and disarray
 Mark'd the fell havoc of the day.

XX

- “Viewing the mountain's ridge askance,
 The Saxon stood in sullen trance,
 Till Moray pointed with his lance,
 And cried—‘Behold yon isle!—
 5 See! none are left to guard its strand,
 But women weak, that wring the hand:
 ’T is there of yore the robber band
 Their booty wont to pile;—
 My purse, with bonnet-pieces store,
 10 To him will swim a bow-shot o'er,
 And loose a shallop from the shore.
 Lightly we'll tame the war-wolf then,
 Lords of his mate, and brood, and den.’

- Forth from the ranks a spearman sprung,
 15 On earth his casque and corselet rung,
 He plunged him in the wave:—
 All saw the deed—the purpose knew,
 And to their clamours Benvenüe
 A mingled echo gave;
 20 The Saxons shout, their mate to cheer,
 The helpless females scream for fear,
 And yells for rage the mountaineer.
 'T was then, as by the outcry riven,
 Pour'd down at once the lowering heaven;
 25 A whirlwind swept Loch Katrine's breast,
 Her billows rear'd their snowy crest.
 Well for the swimmer swell'd they high,
 To mar the Highland marksman's eye;
 For round him shower'd, 'mid rain and hail,
 30 The vengeful arrows of the Gael.—
 In vain—He nears the isle—and lo!
 His hand is on a shallop's bow.
 —Just then a flash of lightning came,
 It tinged the waves and strand with flame;—
 35 I mark'd Duncraggan's widow'd dame,
 Behind an oak I saw her stand,
 A naked dirk gleam'd in her hand:—
 It darken'd,—but, amid the moan
 Of waves, I heard a dying groan;—
 40 Another flash!—the spearman floats
 A weltering corse beside the boats,
 And the stern matron o'er him stood,
 Her hand and dagger streaming blood.

XXI

- “‘Revenge! revenge!’ the Saxons cried,
 The Gaels' exulting shout replied.
 Despite the elemental rage,
 Again they hurried to engage;
 5 But, ere they closed in desperate fight,
 Bloody with spurring came a knight,

- Sprung from his horse, and, from a crag,
 Waved 'twixt the hosts a milk-white flag.
 Clarion and trumpet by his side
 10 Rung forth a truce-note high and wide,
 While, in the Monarch's name, afar
 An herald's voice forbade the war,
 For Bothwell's lord, and Roderick bold,
 Were both, he said, in captive hold."
- 15 —But here the lay made sudden stand,
 The harp escaped the Minstrel's hand!—
 Oft had he stolen a glance, to spy
 How Roderick brook'd his minstrelsy:
 At first, the Chieftain, to the chime,
 20 With lifted hand, kept feeble time;
 That motion ceased,—yet feeling strong
 Varied his look as changed the song;
 At length, no more his deafen'd ear
 The minstrel melody ean hear;
- 25 His face grows sharp,—his hands are clench'd
 As if some pang his heart-strings wrench'd;
 Set are his teeth, his fading eye
 Is sternly fix'd on vacancy;
 Thus, motionless, and moanless, drew
- 30 His parting breath stout Roderick Dhu!—
 Old Allan-bane look'd on aghast,
 While grim and still his spirit pass'd;
 But when he saw that life was fled,
 He pour'd his wailing o'er the dead.

XXII

Lament

- "And art thou cold and lowly laid,
 Thy foeman's dread, thy people's aid,
 Breadalbane's boast, Clan-Alpine's shade!
 For thee shall none a requiem say?
- 5 —For thee,—who loved the minstrel's lay,
 For thee, of Bothwell's house the stay,

The shelter of her exiled line,
 E'en in this prison-house of thine
 I'll wait for Alpine's honour'd Pine!

- 10 "What groans shall yonder valleys fill!
 What shrieks of grief shall rend yon hill!
 What tears of burning rage shall thrill,
 When mourns thy tribe thy battles done,
 Thy fall before the race was won,
 15 Thy sword ungirt ere set of sun!
 There breathes not clansman of thy line,
 But would have given his life for thine.—
 O woe for Alpine's honour'd Pine!

- "Sad was thy lot on mortal stage!—
 20 The captive thrush may brook the cage,
 The prison'd eagle dies for rage.
 Brave spirit, do not scorn my strain!
 And, when its notes awake again,
 Even she, so long beloved in vain,
 25 Shall with my harp her voice combine,
 And mix her woe and tears with mine,
 To wait Clan-Alpine's honour'd Pine."—

XXIII

- Ellen, the while, with bursting heart,
 Remain'd in lordly bower apart,
 Where play'd, with many colour'd gleams,
 Through storied pane the rising beams.
 5 In vain on gilded roof they fall,
 And lighten'd up a tapestried wall,
 And for her use a menial train
 A rich collation spread in vain.
 The banquet proud, the chamber gay,
 10 Scaree drew one curious glance astray;
 Or if she look'd, 't was but to say,
 With better omen dawn'd the day

- In that lone isle, where waved on high
 The dun-deer's hide for canopy;
 15 Where oft her noble father shared
 The simple meal her care prepared,
 While Lufra, crouching by her side,
 Her station claim'd with jealous pride,
 And Douglas, bent on woodland game,
 20 Spoke of the chase to Malcolm Græme,
 Whose answer, oft at random made,
 The wandering of his thoughts betray'd.—
 Those who such simple joys have known,
 Are taught to prize them when they're gone.
 25 But sudden, see, she lifts her head!
 The window seeks with cautious tread.
 What distant music has the power
 To win her in this woeful hour!
 'T was from a turret that o'erhung
 30 Her latticed bower, the strain was sung.

XXIV

Lay of the Imprisoned Huntsman

- “My hawk is tired of perch and hood,
 My idle greyhound loathes his food,
 My horse is weary of his stall,
 And I am sick of captive thrall.
 5 I wish I were as I have been,
 Hunting the hart in forest green,
 With bended bow and bloodhound free,
 For that's the life is meet for me.
 I hate to learn the ebb of time,
 10 From yon dull steeple's drowsy chime,
 Or mark it as the sunbeams crawl,
 Inch after inch, along the wall.
 The lark was wont my matins ring,
 The sable rook my vespers sing;
 15 These towers, although a king's they be,
 Have not a hall of joy for me.

No more at dawning morn I rise,
 And sun myself in Ellen's eyes,
 Drive the fleet deer the forest through,
 20 And homeward wend with evening dew;
 A blithesome welcome blithely meet,
 And lay my trophies at her feet,
 While fled the eve on wing of glee,—
 That life is lost to love and me!"

XXV

The heart-sick lay was hardly said,
 The list'ner had not turn'd her head,
 It trickled still, the starting tear,
 When light a footstep struck her ear,
 5 And Snowdown's graceful knight was near.
 She turn'd the hastier, lest again
 The prisoner should renew his strain.
 "O welcome, brave Fitz-James!" she said;
 "How may an almost orphan maid
 10 Pay the deep debt"—"O say not so!
 To me no gratitude you owe.
 Not mine, alas! the boon to give,
 And bid thy noble father live;
 I can but be thy guide, sweet maid,
 15 With Scotland's King thy suit to aid.
 No tyrant he, though ire and pride
 May lay his better mood aside.
 Come, Ellen, come! 'tis more than time,
 He holds his court at morning prime."
 20 With beating heart, and bosom wrung,
 As to brother's arm she clung.
 Gently he dried the falling tear,
 And gently whisper'd hope and cheer;
 Her faltering steps, half led, half staid,
 25 Through gallery fair, and high arcade,
 Till, at his touch, its wings of pride
 A portal arch unfolded wide.

XXVI

- Within 't was brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright;
It glow'd on Ellen's dazzled sight,
As when the setting sun has given
5 Ten thousand hues to summer even,
And from their tissue fancy frames
Aërial knights and fairy dames.
Still by Fitz-James her footing staid;
A few faint steps she forward made,
10 Then slow her drooping head she raised,
And fearful round the presence gazed;
For him she sought, who own'd this state,
The dreaded Prince whose will was fate!—
She gazed on many a princely port,
15 Might well have ruled a royal court;
On many a splendid garb she gazed,—
Then turn'd bewildered and amazed,
For all stood bare; and, in the room,
Fitz-James alone wore cap and plume.
20 To him each lady's look was lent;
On him each courtier's eye was bent;
Midst furs and silks and jewels sheen,
He stood, in simple Lincoln green,
The centre of the glittering ring,—
25 And Snowdoun's Knight is Scotland's King.

XXVII

- As wreath of snow, on mountain-breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the Monarch's feet she lay;
5 No word her choking voice commands,—
She show'd the ring—she elap'd her hands.
O! not a moment could he brook,
The generous Prince, that suppliant look!

- Gently he raised her,—and, the while,
 10 Check'd with a glance the circle's smile;
 Graceful, but grave, her brow he kiss'd,
 And bade her terrors be dismiss'd:—
 “Yes, Fair; the wandering poor Fitz-James
 The fealty of Scotland claims.
 15 To him thy woes, thy wishes, bring;
 He will redeem his signet-ring.
 Ask nought for Douglas;—yester even,
 His prince and he have much forgiven.
 Wrong hath he had from slanderous tongue,
 20 I, from his rebel kinsmen, wrong.
 We would not, to the vulgar crowd,
 Yield what they craved with clamour loud;
 Calmly we heard and judg'd his cause,
 Our council aided, and our laws.
 25 I stanch'd thy father's death-feud stern,
 With Stout De Vaux and Grey Glencairn;
 And Bothwell's Lord henceforth we own
 The friend and bulwark of our Throne.—
 But, lovely infidel, how now?
 30 What clouds thy misbelieving brow?
 Lord James of Douglas, lend thine aid;
 Thou must confirm this doubting maid.”

XXVIII

- Then forth the noble Douglas sprung,
 And on his neck his daughter hung,
 The Monarch drank, that happy hour,
 The sweetest, holiest draught of Power,—
 5 When it can say, with godlike voice,
 Arise, sad Virtue, and rejoice!
 Yet would not James the general eye
 On Nature's raptures long should pry;
 He stepp'd between—“Nay, Douglas, nay,
 10 Steal not my proselyte away!
 The riddle 't is my right to read,
 That brought this happy chance to speed.

- Yes, Ellen, when disguised I stray
 In life's more low but happier way,
 15 'T is under name which veils my power,
 Nor falsely veils—for Stirling's tower
 Of yore the name of Snowdown claims,
 And Normans call me James Fitz-James.
 Thus watch I o'er insulted laws,
 20 Thus learn to right the injured cause."—
 Then, in a tone apart and low,—
 "Ah, little traitress! none must know
 What idle dream, what lighter thought,
 What vanity full dearly bought,
 25 Join'd to thine eye's dark witchcraft, drew
 My spell-bound steps to Benvenue,
 In dangerous hour, and all but gave
 Thy Monarch's life to mountain glaive!"—
 Aloud he spoke—"Thou still dost hold
 30 That little talisman of gold,
 Pledge of my faith, Fitz-James's ring—
 What seeks fair Ellen of the King?"

XXIX

- Full well the conscious maiden guess'd
 He probed the weakness of her breast;
 But, with that consciousness, there came
 A lightening of her fears for Græme,
 5 And more the deem'd the Monarch's ire
 Kindled 'gainst him, who, for her sire
 Rebellious broadsword boldly drew;
 And, to her generous feeling true,
 She craved the grace of Roderick Dhu.
 10 "Forbear thy suit:—the King of kings
 Alone can stay life's parting wings.
 I know his heart, I know his hand,
 Have shared his cheer, and proved his brand:—
 My fairest earldom would I give
 15 To bid Clan-Alpine's Chieftain live!—

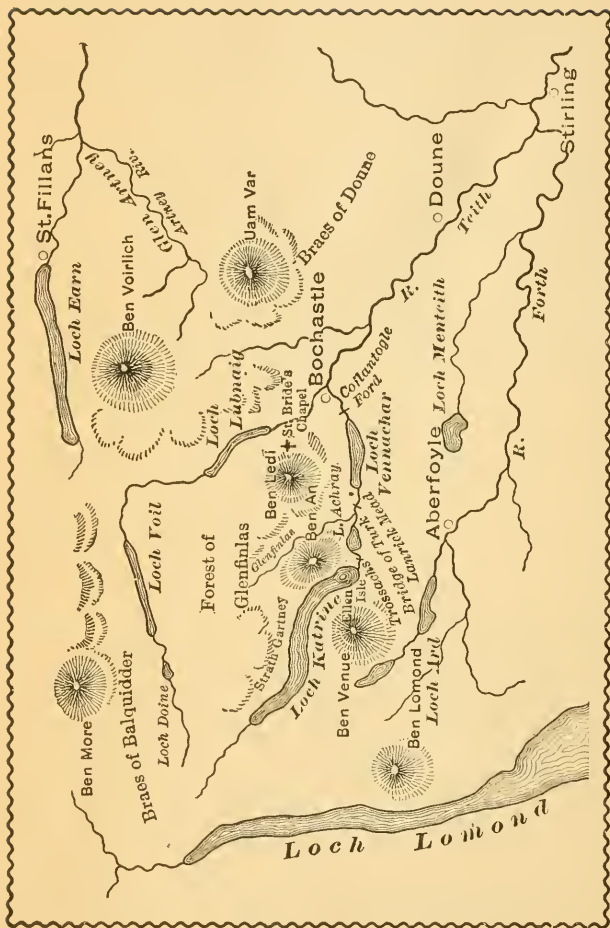
Hast thou no other boon to crave?
No other captive friend to save?"
Blushing, she turn'd her from the King,
And to the Douglas gave the ring,
20 As if she wish'd her sire to speak
The suit that stain'd her glowing cheek.—
"Nay, then, my pledge has lost its force,
And stubborn justice holds her course.—
Malcolm, come forth!"—and, at the word,
25 Down kneel'd the Græme to Scotland's Lord.
"For thee, rash youth, no suppliant sues,
From thee may Vengeance claim her dues,
Who, nurtur'd underneath our smile,
Hast paid our care by treacherous wile,
30 And sought, amid thy faithful clan,
A refuge for an outlaw'd man,
Dishonouring thus thy loyal name—
Fetters and warder for the Græme!"—
His chain of gold the King unstrung,
35 The links o'er Malcolm's neck he flung,
Then gently drew the glittering band,
And laid the clasp on Ellen's hand.

Harp of the North, farewell! The hills grow dark,
On purple peaks a deeper shade descending;
40 In twilight copse the glow-worm lights her spark,
The deer, half-seen, are to the covert wending.
Resume thy wizard elm! the fountain lending,
And the wild breeze, thy wilder minstrelsy;
Thy numbers sweet with nature's vespers blending,
45 With distant echo from the fold and lea,
And herd-boy's evening pipe, and hum of housing bee.

Yet, once again, farewell, thou Minstrel harp!
Yet, once again, forgive my feeble sway,
And little reck I of the censure sharp
50 May idly cavil at an idle lay.

Much have I owed thy strains on life's long way,
Through secret woes the world has never known,
When on the weary night dawn'd wearier day,
And bitterer was the grief devour'd alone.
55 That I o'er lived such woes, Enchantress! is thine own.

Hark! as my lingering footsteps slow retire,
Some Spirit of the Air has waked thy string!
'T is now a seraph bold, with touch of fire,
'T is now the brush of Fairy's frolic wing.
60 Receding now, the dying numbers ring
Fainter and fainter down the rugged dell,
And now the mountain breezes scarcely bring
A wandering witch-note of the distant spell—
And now, 't is silent all!—Enchantress, fare thee well!



MAP TO ILLUSTRATE "THE LADY OF THE LAKE"

NOTES

CANTO FIRST

- Int. 2. **Witch elm.** The long leaved or drooping elm.
Saint Fillan. A Scottish abbot who flourished in the seventh century.
10. **Caledon.** Caledonia was an old name for Scotland and is still used poetically.
- I, 2. **Monan's rill.** Monan was a Scottish martyr of the fourth century. The stream does not appear to have been identified.
4. **Glenartney** A vale in Perthshire.
6. **Benvoirlich.** See map. *Ben* means mountain.
- II, 16. **Uam-Var.** A mountain near Menteith. See map.
- III, 18. **Linn.** Here means "steep ravine."
- V, 4. **Menteith.** See note to II. 16.
8. **Lochard, Aberfoyle.** See map.
10. **Loch Achray.** A small lake lying at the foot of Benvenue, between Loch Katrine and Loch Vennachar.
12. **Benvenue,** meaning "Central mountain," near Loch Katrine.
- VI, 2. **Cambusmore.** A family seat about two miles from Callander on the Keltie.—SCOTT.
4. **Benledi.** A mountain near Callander. Its name signifies "the mountain of God."
5. **Bochastle's heath.** A plain lying between the east end of Loch Vennachar and the river Teith.
11. **Brigg of Turk.** A bridge about a mile above Loch Vennachar.—SCOTT.
- VII, 7. **St. Hubert's breed.** A breed of powerful hounds, usually black, kept by the abbots of St. Hubert, the patron saint of hunters.
14. **Quarry.** Prey, now used only poetically.

- VIII, 7. **Death-wound.** When the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter had the perilous task of going in upon, and killing or disabling the desperate animal. At certain times of the year this was held particularly dangerous, a wound received from a stag's horn being then deemed poisonous, and more dangerous than one from the tusks of a boar.—SCOTT.
- Death-halloo.** A shout uttered by the hunter after having killed the deer.
8. **Whinyard.** A short hanger used as a knife at meals, and as a sword in broils.—JAMIESON.
15. **Trosachs.** A wild picturesque region between Loch Katrine and Loch Achray.
- XI, 13. **Tower . . . on Shinar's plain.** This refers to the Tower of Babel.
25. **Sheen**=glittering.
- XII, 3. **Eglantine.** Sweet-brier.
20. **Glist'ning streamers.** Spreading branches of the rose and ivy.
- XIV, 10. **Loch Katrine.** The lake referred to in the title of this poem, which is situated in the southwestern part of Perthshire.
24. **Ben-an.** A mountain at the north of Loch Katrine.
- XV, 8. **Cloister.** Convent or monastery.
- XVI, 2. **Beshrew.** A mild imprecation.
13. **Highland plunderers.** The clans who inhabited the romantic regions in the neighborhood of Loch Katrine, were, even until a late period, much addicted to predatory excursions upon their lowland neighbors.—SCOTT.
18. **Falchion.** A short curved sword.
- XVII, 24. **Naiad.** Goddess of rivers and springs.
- XIX, 2. **Snood.** A ribbon worn in the hair by Scottish maidens until their marriage.
- Plaid.** A striped or variegated woolen cloth, worn as an over-garment by the Scottish Highlanders.
3. **Brooch.** An ornament used to fasten the plaid.
- XXII, 4. **Wildered**=bewildered.

8. **Couch was pull'd.** A Highlander's couch often consisted of freshly pulled heather.
11. **Mere.** Small lake.
13. **By the rood.** By the cross.
- XXIII, 8. **Visioned future.** If force of evidence could authorize us to believe things inconsistent with the general laws of nature, enough might be produced in favor of the existence of the Second Sight.—SCOTT.
12. **Lincoln green.** A woolen cloth made at Lincoln, and much worn by hunters.
- XXV, 11. **Retreat in dangerous hour.** The Celtic chieftains, whose lives were continually exposed to peril, had usually, in the most retired spot of their domains, some place of retreat for the hour of necessity, which, as circumstances would admit, was a tower, a cavern, or a rustic hut in a strong and secluded situation.—SCOTT.
- XXVIII, 7. **Brook to wield.** Brook here means "was able."
14. **Ferragus or Ascabart.** In medieval romances the names of these two fabled giants of enormous strength frequently appear.
- XXIX, 5. **To whom, though more than kindred knew.** The meaning of this somewhat obscure expression seems to be that Ellen loved her aunt, Lady Margaret, as she would her own mother.
10. **Unasked his birth and name.** The Highlanders are said to have considered it as churlish to ask a stranger his name and lineage, before he had taken refreshment. Feuds were so frequent among them, that a contrary rule would, in many cases, have produced the discovery of some circumstance, which might have excluded the guest from the benefit of the assistance he stood in need of.—SCOTT.
- XXXI, 15. **Pibroch.** A wild Highland air played upon the bagpipes.
19. **Bittern.** A species of heron.

CANTO SECOND

- I, 1. **Black-cock.** The black grouse.
7. **Minstrel grey.** The Highland chieftain maintained as an officer in his household, a bard or minstrel, whose duty it was to extol in song, the triumphs of the clan.
- VII, 18. **Harp which erst Saint Modan sway'd.** "I am not prepared to show that Saint Modan was a performer on the harp. It was, however, no unsaintly accomplishment, for Saint Dunstan certainly did play upon that instrument, which retaining, as was natural, a portion of the sanctity attached to its master's character, announced future events by its spontaneous sound."—SCOTT
- VIII, 9. **Douglasses.** The event referred to is the exile of the Douglasses during the reign of James V.
- IX, 6. **Tweed to Spey.** The northern and southern boundaries of Scotland. Compare Judges xx : i. "From Dan even to Beersheba."
- X, 16. **Lady of the Bleeding Heart.** The Bleeding Heart was the cognizance of the house of Douglas assumed when one of their number received from Robert Bruce the solemn commission to carry his heart to the Holy Land.
- XI, 6. **Strathspey.** A Scottish dance of a lively nature.
14. **Loch Lomond.** See map.
16. **Lennox foray.** A raid for plunder into the territory of the Lennox family.
- XII, 5. **Holy Rood.** The royal castle at Edinburgh, named from the Abbey of Holyrood.
20. **Dispensation.** A special dispensation of the Pope to enable Roderick to marry Ellen, was necessary on account of their cousinship.
- XIII, 4. **All that a mother could bestow,
To Lady Margaret's care I owe.**
These lines emphasize the fact that Lady Margaret is the mother of Roderick Dhu, therefore Ellen and Roderick Dhu are cousins.
15. **Maronnan's cell.** The parish of Kilmaronock, at the eastern extremity of Loch Lomond, derives its name

from a cell or chapel, dedicated to Saint Maronoch, or Marnoch, or Maronnan, about whose sanctity very little is now remembered.—SCOTT.

XIV, 4. **Bracklinn.** This is a beautiful cascade made at a place called the Bridge of Bracklinn, by a mountain stream called the Keltie, about a mile from the village of Callander, in Menteith.—SCOTT.

8. **Claymore.** The broadsword used by the Highlanders.

XV, 4. **Tine-man.** Tine is a Scotticism for "lost;" the reference according to Scott is to the fact that Archibald, the third earl of Douglas was so unfortunate in all his enterprises that he acquired the epithet of *Tine-man*, because he *tined*, or lost, his followers in every battle which he fought.

17. **Beltane game.** May-day sports.

XVI, 5. **Glengyle.** A valley at the extreme western end of Loch Katrine.

7. **Brianchoil.** Situated on the southern side of Loch Katrine.

10. **Bannered Pine.** Clan-Alpine's emblem or badge.

21. **Chanters.** The pipe which sounds the tenor or treble in a bagpipe.

XVIII, 11. **The chorus first could Allan know.** The chorus was the first part of the boat-song that was distinguishable to the minstrel.

XIX, 7. **To bourgeon.** To sprout or blossom.

9. **Agen**=again (obsolete).

10. **Vich.** Gaelic for "descendant of." **dhu**=black. The line "Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu" means therefore "Roderick the Black, descendant of Alpine."

XX, 1. **Glen Fruin.** A clan battle between the Macgregors and the Colquhouns.—SCOTT.

2-8. **Bannochar, Glen Luss, Ross-dhu, Leven-glen.** These are the names of different valleys bordering upon Loch Lomond.

2. **Slogan.** The war-cry of a Highland clan.

13. **The rose-bud that graces yon islands.** The metaphor in this line refers to Ellen.

XXIII, 15. **Percy's Norman pennon.** A trophy captured by the Douglas in a raid (1388) which led to the battle of Otterburn.

22. **The waned crescent.** The real meaning of this is rather obscure. It may mean the failure of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleugh (one of Scott's ancestors whose shield bore a crescent moon) who made an unsuccessful attempt to free the young king from the domination of the Douglas, or it possibly refers to some previous victory over Turkish armies in the East.

24. **Blantyre.** Ancient abbey or priory near Bothwell Castle.

XXIV, 14. **Goddess of the wood.** Diana.

XXVI, 11. **Glenfinlas.** A wooded valley to the northeast of Loch Katrine.

14. **Royal ward.** Under the guardianship of the king.

20. **Strath-Endrick glen.** A valley, southeast of Loch Lomond, which is watered by the Endrick.

XXVIII, 12. **Tamed the Border-side.** In 1529 James V. made a convention at Edinburgh, for the purpose of considering the best mode of quelling the Border robbers, who, during the license of his minority, and the troubles which followed had committed many exorbitances. An expedition was accordingly formed, and many of the most noted freebooters were seized and executed.—SCOTT.

19-22. **Meggat, Yarrow, Tweed, Ettrick, Teviot.** These streams are in the southern part of Scotland. The waters of the Meggat, Yarrow, Ettrick and Teviot flow into the Tweed.

XXX, 14. **Links of Forth.** The windings of the River Forth and the ground lying along them.

15. **Stirling's Porch.** From early times the Scottish kings resided at Stirling Castle.

XXXI, 11. **Battled fence.** A strong wall or battlement built for defence, having at intervals, openings from which to discharge missiles.

XXXV, 7. . . . pity t'were.

Such cheek should feel the midnight air.

A charge of effeminacy against Malcolm. A taunt of this nature was particularly bitter and insulting to the hardy Highland character.

15. **Henchman.** This officer was a sort of secretary, who was expected to be ready on all occasions to hazard his life for his master. At drinking-bouts he stood behind his seat, at his haunch, whence the title is derived, and watched the conversation, to see if any one offended his patron.—SCOTT.

XXXVI, 5. **Fiery Cross.** When a chieftain designed to summon his clan, upon any sudden or important emergency, he slew a goat, and making a cross of any light wood, seared its extremities in the fire, and extinguished them in the blood of the animal. This was called the *Fiery Cross*, also *Crean Tarigh*, or the *Cross of Shame*, because disobedience to what the symbol implied, inferred infamy. It was delivered to a swift and trusty messenger, who ran full speed with it to the next hamlet, where he presented it to the principal person, with a single word, implying the place of rendezvous. He who received the symbol was bound to send it forward with equal despatch to the next village; and thus it passed with incredible celerity through all the district which owed allegiance to the chief, and also among his allies and neighbors, if the danger was common to them. At sight of the Fiery Cross, every man, from sixteen years old to sixty, capable of bearing arms, was obliged instantly to repair, in his best arms and accoutrements, to the place of rendezvous. He who failed to appear suffered the extremities of fire and sword, which were emblematically denounced to the disobedient by the bloody and burnt marks upon this warlike signal. During the civil war of 1745-6, the Fiery Cross often made its circuit; and upon one occasion it passed through the whole district of Bredalbane, a tract of thirty-two miles, in three hours.—SCOTT.

CANTO THIRD

- II, 21. **Cushat dove.** The ring-dove or wood-pigeon.
- IV, 3. **Shivers.** Splinters is a more generally used term.
14. **Benharrow.** A mountain to the north of Loch Lomond.
16. **Druid.** A priest of the ancient religion of the Celtic races in Britain and Gaul, which taught the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, and kept up the traditional belief, that in order to please the gods, human sacrifices must be made.
27. **Strath.** A broad valley.
- VI, 20. **Cabala.** An ancient belief, or mysterious kind of science, supposed to have been revealed to the ancient Jews, by which hidden Scripture meanings are interpreted. Its followers pretended even to foretell future events by the study of this doctrine.
- VII, 6. **River Demon.** The river demon, or river-horse, for it is that form which he commonly assumes, is the Kelpy of the Lowlands, an evil and malicious spirit, delighting to forebode and to witness calamity. He frequents most Highland lakes and rivers; and one of his most memorable exploits was performed upon the banks of Loch Vennachar, in the very district which forms the scene of our action: it consisted in the destruction of a funeral procession, with all its attendants.—SCOTT.
8. **“Noontide hag.”** Called in Gaelic *Glas-lich*, a tall, emaciated, gigantic female figure, is supposed in particular to haunt the district of Knoidart.—SCOTT.
20. **Ben-Shie.** A ben-shie or banshee was a supernatural spirit or being, which many Highland families were supposed to have attached to them. It presaged an approaching calamity, or more especially a death in the family, by dismal midnight howlings.
- VIII, 13. **Inch-Cailliach.** The Isle of Nuns, or of Old Women, is a most beautiful island at the lower extremity of Loch Lomond.—SCOTT.
- X, 31. **Colr Uriskin.** See note to XXV, 22.

- XII, 5. **Lanrick mead.** A meadow or plain to the west of Loch Vennachar.
- XV, 2. **Duncraggan.** A small village or hamlet situated near the Brigg of Turk, between Loch Achray and Loch Vennachar.
22. **Coronach.** A wild dirge of lamentation, sung by members of the clan over the body of a deceased friend.
- XVI, 17. **Correi.** The hollow side of the hill, where game usually lies.—SCOTT.
- XVII, 1. **Stumah.** Means faithful. Here it is the name of a dog.
- XIX, 2. **Strath-Ire.** A valley to the east of Ben Ledi.
10. **Chapel of St. Bride.** A chapel, which stood in the middle of Strath-Ire.
- XX, 3, 4. **Tombea and Armandave,** are the names of places in the neighborhood of Strath-Ire.
8. **Coif.** A head-covering worn by the Scottish matron.
- XXIV, 2. **Midnight blaze.** Frequently the shepherds set fire to the dry heather on the Scottish moorland, that their flocks might have advantage of the fresh herbage.
- XXV, 7. **Rednoch.** A lordly castle just east of Lake Menteith.
8. **Cardross.** A castle on the river Forth, a little south of Rednoch.
9. **Duchray's towers.** Duchray Castle. This was an ancient stronghold.
22. **Coir-nan-Uriskin.** This is a very steep and most romantic hollow in the mountain of Benvenue, overhanging the southeastern extremity of Loch Katrine. The name literally implies the Corri, or Den, of the wild or shaggy men. Tradition has ascribed to the *Urisk*, who gives name to the cavern, a figure between a goat and a man; in short, however much the classical reader may be startled, precisely that of the Grecian satyr.—SCOTT.
- XXVI, 32. **Satyr.** See note immediately preceding.
- XXVII, 6. **Beal-nam-bo.** Bealach-nam-Bo, or the pass of cattle, is a most magnificent glade, overhung with

aged birch-trees, a little higher up the mountain than Coir-nan-Uriskin. The whole composes the most sublime piece of scenery that imagination can conceive.—SCOTT.

- XXIX, 1. **Ave Maria.** The first two words of a Latin prayer to the Virgin, meaning Hail Mary.

CANTO FOURTH

- I, 5. **Wilding.** Wild.
- II, 1. **Conceit.** Fanciful idea.
10. **Braes of Doune.** Sloping hill-sides near Doune Castle on the north side of the Teith.
- III, 5. **Boune.** To make ready; to prepare.
- IV, 9. **Taghairm.** The Highlanders, like all rude people, had various superstitious modes of inquiring into futurity. One of the most noted was the *Taghairm*, mentioned in the text. A person was wrapped in the skin of a newly-slain bullock, and deposited beside a waterfall, or at the bottom of a precipice, or in some other strange, wild, and unusual situation, where the scenery around him suggested nothing but objects of horror. In this situation he revolved in his mind the question proposed, and whatever was impressed upon him by his exalted imagination, passed for the inspiration of the disembodied spirits who haunt these desolate recesses.—SCOTT (abridged).
11. **Gallangad.** Evidently the scene of a raid or foray. The exact location of the place has been lost sight of.
19. **Kernes.** Light armed infantry soldiers.
20. **Beal'maha.** "The pass of the plain" near Loch Lomond.
23. **Dennan's Row.** The starting point for ascending Ben Lomond.
- V, 4. **Boss.** Knob; protuberance.
6. **Hero's Targe.** A rock in the Forest of Glenfinlas.
20. **Watching while the deer is broke.** Everything belonging to the chase was matter of solemnity among our ancestors; but nothing was more so than the mode of cutting up, or, as it was technically called, *breaking*

the slaughtered stag. The forester had his allotted portion; the hounds had a certain allowance; and, to make the division as general as possible, the very birds had their share also.—SCOTT.

VI, 25-26. Which spills the foremost foeman's life,

That party conquers in the strife.

Though this be in the text described as the response of the Taghairm, or Oracle of the Hide, it was of itself an augury frequently attended to. The fate of the battle was often anticipated, in the imagination of the combatants, by observing which party first shed blood.—SCOTT.

VIII, 1. **Doune.** A castle on the Teith, above Stirling.

4. **Sable pale.** A black perpendicular stripe, upon a family coat-of-arms.

IX, 15. **Red streamers of the north.** Northern lights or Aurora Borealis.

X, 25. **Cambus-kenneth.** An abbey situated on the Forth near Stirling, the ruins of which still may be seen.

XII, 25. **Pall.** A costly material from which the outer garments of the nobility were made.

Vair. A fur employed in making garments for persons of rank, in medieval times.

XIII, 6. **Wonn'd.** Lived or dwelt. (Obsolete.)

14. **Fairies' fatal green.** Green was considered an unlucky color in many parts of Scotland, for the reason that elves or gnomes assumed this color, and became enraged should a mortal presume to wear it.

16. **Thou wert christen'd man.** According to medieval belief, a baptized Christian possessed many privileges. Should he, therefore, fall under the spell of the elves, he was granted by them, certain rights and liberties because of this distinction.

XV, 32. **Dunfermline.** A town near Edinburgh, Scotland's kings' residence in early times.

XVI, 15. **Bourne.** Stream.

20. **Augur scathe.** Foretell injury.

XIX, 11. **Lordship.** Estate.

- XXII, 5-6. **Allan, Devan.** Two streams of Perthshire, which flow into the Forth.
- XXIII, 13. **From Maudlin's charge.** Maudlin is a diminutive, or corruption of the proper name Magdalen.
17. **Peasant pitch'd a bar.** Tossing a heavy hammer, a feat of strength, practiced by the peasants on public occasions or holidays.
25. **Batten. Fatten.**
- XXV, 5. **A stag of ten.** Having ten branches on his antlers, consequently full grown
- XXXI, 27. **Coilantogle's ford.** A ford near the eastern end of Loch Vennachar. See map.

CANTO FIFTH

III, 11. **Shingles.** Gravel; pebbles.

VI, 13. **While Albany, with feeble hand,**

Held borrow'd truncheon of command.

The Duke of Albany was Regent while James V. was in his minority. Albany was a cousin of the King.

"There is scarcely a more disorderly period in Scottish history than that which succeeded the battle of Flodden and occupied the minority of James V. Feuds of ancient standing broke out like old wounds, and every quarrel among the independent nobility, which occurred daily, and almost hourly, gave rise to fresh bloodshed."—SCOTT.

15. **Mewed.** Confined.

X, 26. **Targe.** Shield.

Jack. A coat of defensive armor quilted and covered with leather.

XI, 17, 18. **Deeming this path you might pursue**

Without a pass from Roderick Dhu.

This incident, like some other passages in the poem, illustrative of the character of the ancient Gael, is not imaginary, but borrowed from fact. The Highlanders, with the inconsistency of most nations in the same state, were alternately capable of great exertions of generosity, and of cruel revenge and perfidy.—SCOTT.

XII, 6, 7. On Bochastle the mouldering lines,**Where Rome, the Empress of the world**

The torrent which discharges itself from Loch Ven-nachar, the lowest and eastmost of the three lakes which form the scenery adjoining to the Trosachs, sweeps through a flat and extensive moor, called Bochastle. Upon a small eminence, called the *Dun* of Bochastle, and, indeed, on the plain itself, are some intrenchments which have been thought Roman. There is, adjacent to Callander, a sweet villa, the residence of Captain Fairfoul, entitled the Roman Camp.—SCOTT.

XIV, 10. Carpet knight. More of a courtier than a fighter.**XV, 2. His targe he threw.** A round target of light wood, covered with strong leather, and studded with brass or iron, was a necessary part of a Highlander's equipment. In charging regular troops, they received the thrust of the bayonet in the buckler, twisted it aside, and used the broadsword against the encumbered soldier.—SCOTT.**XVII, 25. Palfrey.** A saddle horse used by ladies.**XVIII, 17. Pricked.** Spurred.**21 to 28. Torry, Lendrick, Deanstown, Doune, Blair-Drummond, Ochertyre, Kier.** All these are situated on the banks of the Teith.**35. Stirling.** Stirling Castle, the residence of James V., was the principal stronghold of Scotland.**XIX, 20. By Saint Serle.** A minor and almost forgotten Scottish Saint.**XX, 12. Bride of Heaven.** One who devotes her life to the service of the Church.**19. Oh sad and fatal mound.** An eminence on the north-east of the castle, where state criminals were executed. Stirling was often polluted with noble blood.—SCOTT.**30. Morrice-dancers.** The morrice dance was of Moorish origin, and was a popular form of amusement.¹**32. The burghers hold their sports to-day.** Every burgh of Scotland, of the least note, but more especially the considerable towns, had their solemn *play* or

festival, when feats of archery were exhibited, and prizes distributed to those who excelled in wrestling, hurling the bar, and the other gymnastic exercises of the period. Stirling, a usual place of royal residence, was not likely to be deficient in pomp upon such occasions, especially since James V. was very partial to them. His ready participation in these popular amusements was one cause of his acquiring the title of King of the Commons.—SCOTT.

XXI, 10. **Jennet.** A small horse originally bred in Spain.

20. **Commons' King.** See note on XX. 32.

XXII, 6. **Bold Robin . . . band.** The exhibition of this renowned Outlaw and his band was a favourite frolic at such festivals as we are describing. It would seem, from the complaints of the General Assembly of the Kirk, that these profane festivities were continued down to 1592. Bold Robin was, to say the least, equally successful in maintaining his ground against the reformed clergy of England, for the simple and evangelical Latimer complains of coming to a country church, where the people refused to hear him, because it was Robin Hood's day; and his mitre and rochet were fain to give way to the village pastime.—SCOTT.

XXII, 7. **Friar Tuck, Scathelocke, Maid Marian, Scarlet, Mutch, and Little John.** Members of Robin Hood's famous band of outlaws. In *Ivanhoe* Sir Walter Scott gives a stirring account of the achievements of this medieval outlaw and his followers.

XXIV, 2. **Ladies' Rock.** An eminence between the Castle and Grey-friars church from which the ladies of the Court witnessed the games.

XXXI, 3. **Cognizance.** The badge or distinguishing mark by which a knight or his dependants were recognized.

CANTO SIXTH

I, 15. **Gyve.** Fetter; shackle.

II, 17. **Beakers.** Drinking goblets of generous size.

24. **Harness.** Defensive armor and accoutrements worn by knights and soldiers.

- III, 5. **Adventurers.** Mercenary soldiers; mainly foreigners, who sold their services to the highest bidder.
18. **Halberd.** A weapon formed of a shaft of wood, a head armed with a steel point and a cross-piece flat and pointed at both ends.
- V, 6. **Upsees.** A Bacchanial interjection borrowed from the Dutch.—SCOTT.
14. **Cure.** Priestly charge. **Placket.** Petticoat.
15. **Lurch, v. t.** To defeat; to disappoint; to evade.
- VI, 24. **Juggler** The jugglers used to call in the aid of various assistants to render these performances as captivating as possible. The glee-maiden was a necessary attendant. Her duty was tumbling and dancing, and therefore the Anglo-Saxon version of St. Mark's Gospel states Herodias to have vaulted or tumbled before King Herod.—SCOTT.
- VIII, 12. **Needwood.** A royal forest in one of the midland counties of England.
- X, 25. **Barret-cap.** A kind of head-piece or cap formerly worn by soldiers.
- XII, 26. **Leech.** Physician.
- XIII, 1. **Prore.** Prow.
- XV, 9. **Erne.** Eagle.
- XVI, 15. **Vaward.** Vanguard. The troops who march in front of an army; the first line.
- XVII, 26. **Tinchel.** A circle of sportsmen, who, by surrounding an extensive space, and gradually closing in, bring a number of deer or other game within a narrow compass.
- XVIII, 34. **Linn.** Waterfall.
- XX, 9. **Bonnet-pieces.** A gold coin on which the king's head was represented with a bonnet instead of a crown, coined by the "Commons' King."—TAYLOR.
- XXI, 18. **Brooked.** Here means bore.
- XXIII, 4. **Storied pane.** A window painted with historical or legendary scenes. Compare Gray's *Elegy*
 "Can storied urn or animated bust"
 also, Milton's *Il Penseroso*
 "Storied windows richly dight."

XXVI, 25. **Snowdoun's Knight**, etc. James V. was a monarch whose good and benevolent intentions often rendered his romantic freaks venial, if not respectable, since, from his anxious attention to the interests of the lower and most oppressed class of his subjects, he was, as we have seen, popularly termed the *King of the Commons*. For the purpose of seeing that justice was regularly administered he used to traverse the vicinage of his several palaces in various disguises.—SCOTT.

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